

BEFORE THE
CALIFORNIA BUREAU OF STATE AUDITS (BSA)

In the matter of

Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC)

Applicant Review Panel (ARP) Public Meeting

555 Capitol Mall, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95814

TUESDAY, AUGUST 24, 2010

9:15 A.M.

Reported by:

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APPEARANCES

Members Present

Nasir Ahmadi, Chair

Mary Camacho, Vice Chair

Kerri Spano, Panel Member

Staff Present

Stephanie Ramirez-Ridgeway, Panel Counsel

Diane Hamel, Executive Secretary

Interviewees

Kathryn S. Black

Velveth G. Schmitz

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 9:15 a.m.

3 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: The hour being 9:15 and a
4 quorum being present, let's go ahead and get started.

5 We have a full complement of applicants to
6 interview today. And we begin with Kathryn Black.

7 Good morning, Ms. Black. Are you ready to begin?

8 MS. BLACK: Yes.

9 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Wonderful. Please start
10 the clock.

11 What specific skills do you believe a good
12 Commissioner should possess?

13 Of those skills, which do you possess?

14 Which do you not possess and how will you
15 compensate for it?

16 Is there anything in your life that would
17 prohibit or impair your ability to perform the duties of a
18 Commissioner?

19 MS. BLACK: Well, the specific skills, there are
20 many. But the most important ones I think are the ability
21 to work in a group with other people for a common goal.
22 Spoken and written communications to groups of people as
23 spoken like this. And also the reverse of listening to
24 spoken communications and reading written communications
25 so that you're taking in information as well as giving it

1 out.

2 You need math skills, the ability to read and
3 absorb data, to look at maps, to understand statistical
4 explanations, basic math skills. And the ability to
5 postpone judgment until you have all the information, even
6 if the Commissioner has an idea ahead of time of what
7 should happen. The ability to delay that until you've
8 gotten all of the information. And then from there, to
9 make a decision which may be different than what you
10 originally thought usually is.

11 And in addition, I believe that there are two
12 characteristics. They're not skills. But a Commissioner
13 should be ethical and also a Commissioner should be
14 comfortable with people, since there is a lot of contact
15 with other people as part of the way the Act is written.

16 For me, the only thing that I'm not really fast
17 at is creating a spreadsheet. I can read them just fine.
18 But I don't make them often enough. So if I have to get
19 out spreadsheets out, I know how to do it. But if I had
20 to do it, I would be doing it better. But I can
21 understand them.

22 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Describe a circumstance
23 from your personal experience where you had to work with
24 others to resolve a conflict or difference of opinion.
25 Please describe the issue and explain your role in

1 addressing and resolving the conflict.

2 If you are selected to serve on the Citizen's
3 Redistricting Commission, tell us how you would resolve
4 conflicts that may arise among the Commissioners.

5 MS. BLACK: Well, I actually have two
6 circumstances because there are a little bit different.
7 But they both involve being on the school board. I'm on a
8 school board in a -- I was on a school board of a big
9 district. It has close to 900 square miles, and it's in
10 the mountains. And it's a small district, so
11 traditionally the board is responsible for hiring, firing,
12 and salary negotiations.

13 And the first -- my first term of office, during
14 salary negotiations, things fell apart because the
15 representative for the faculty and the president of the
16 school board -- not me -- were the two people most ill
17 suited to deal with one another. So they became angry
18 early on our very first meeting. He had been doing it for
19 years. It was just a personality conflict. And so it
20 completely -- negotiations fell apart. They refused to
21 negotiate any more.

22 So there were two women on it at that time. And
23 at the suggestion of the other one and backing me, we were
24 the new people. We said we need to get together with
25 teachers separately from a negotiations meeting in an

1 informal thing all of the faculty and all of the Board and
2 the sprint and the people from the administration. But
3 it's a small school. And we need to just air our
4 differences and get back to negotiating, which was always
5 delayed by the budget from the State anyway.

6 But so we had a meeting in a room about this size
7 with 15 faculty members and five Board members and cookies
8 that they brought, the faculty brought. We just sat there
9 and listened to everyone and what they had to say. And
10 then we responded. If we felt really insulted or
11 something by what -- but otherwise we just listened to
12 them. And then we explained our side from the point of
13 view of we were nervous about the State budget, would we
14 have enough funding. Everyone left friends, which we had
15 been before negotiations, which is true every year.
16 You're friendly until negotiations and then you're not
17 friendly for two months and you're friendly again.

18 It worked. We went right back to negotiations
19 two days later, and we had an agreement within a few days
20 after that. So maybe that involved listening to everyone
21 involved and hearing what people were saying instead of
22 just reacting to what they thought the message was.

23 And the other one also involves schools was maybe
24 seven or eight years later we had a young man that we had
25 had to suspend and actually expel. And he and his family

1 lived up a canyon where the School Board and the school --
2 school bus goes. And there were shots fired at the school
3 bus shortly after he was expelled from their property.

4 So we had at our next Board meeting which was
5 just a few days later and we, of course, the
6 superintendent contacted the sheriff. It was all more or
7 less under control. But we weren't sending the bus up
8 there. The parents were bringing their children to the
9 end of the road because it was safer that way until it was
10 settled.

11 Anyway, at that meeting, we had all of the
12 fathers and brothers and cousins and uncles that lived on
13 that road come to us and stand up and offer to take their
14 guns and go to that family's house and speak to the
15 father.

16 And the way we solved that is we just thanked
17 them very much, but we said the sheriff had it under
18 control. And we appreciated it, but we thought it was a
19 bad idea. And that settled down. All right.

20 But again, it was listening to people and not
21 outwardly panicking. It was an interesting situation.
22 And that's that one.

23 And if I were a Commissioner and conflicts arose
24 within the group, I think having watched a lot of --
25 little bits of a lot of the interviews and read a little

1 bit, I really think that people that are left and whoever
2 ends up -- I think everyone has good intent. So with good
3 intent I think from the beginning when meetings -- if
4 people do treat each other with respect, there should be
5 no conflict that comes up that's so bad that you're in a
6 situation about it. But if it does, we're back again.
7 Sit down separately from the issue, take however long it
8 takes, a half hour. Remember why we're all there.
9 Listen, listen, listen, and then respond with respect to
10 the other people. That usually works.

11 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: How will the Commission's
12 work impact the state? Which of these impacts will
13 improve the state the most? And is there any potential
14 for the Commission's work to harm the state? And if so,
15 in what ways?

16 MS. BLACK: This was a good one. Well, ideally,
17 the good impact that we hope will have is it will open up
18 the entire process and shine light on it. When it
19 happens, people don't feel so alienated from government.

20 The main problem people have when you talk to
21 them, people -- voters and non-voters -- is that they feel
22 left out. It's all been a secret. It's all winks and
23 nods and handshakes behind closed doors. The way this has
24 been set up and the way that you have so far done it has
25 been so open, should anyone care to look, it's right

1 there. And it's so open.

2 So I think the voters will feel invited back into
3 the process ideally, and there will be more registration
4 and there should be more voting. We might end up with
5 somewhat different or radically different districts. And
6 my hope would be that this would lead to actually
7 legislation happening in Sacramento instead of everything
8 in the state being done by initiative. Although I
9 understand I'm sitting here right now because of an
10 initiative.

11 But still in the end, there are reasons why those
12 people are elected, and one of them is to govern this
13 state. So I would hope that when people feel that they're
14 adequately represented that the urge to make an initiative
15 for every single thing would -- we'd have a few
16 initiatives and not many -- but this also leads to the
17 possible downside is a very idealistic act. We just get
18 citizens doing this, everything will be wonderful. We'll
19 all be well represented and it's a very -- it is
20 idealistic. And because of that, I think it -- that could
21 lead to really high expectations for the people who take
22 an interest in politics that could have perhaps
23 unrealistic expectations of the speed at which things
24 would change. And that could lead to real disappointment
25 if the Commissioners appear -- when the Commission would

1 appear in public, they have to appear committed and they
2 have to appear interested in what the people who commit --
3 should they get -- whatever, they have to appear committed
4 and they have to follow through.

5 And it has to be clear that they're following
6 through, even if the results aren't what each individual
7 person might want, then it has to be clear that they have
8 put their best -- their committed. They're interested in
9 the voter and that they're doing what is humanly possible
10 for good outcome, because if that's not true, those people
11 that are relying on this for a miraculous change, they'd
12 be satisfied if it just looks like people are attempting
13 to do what is in the Voters First Act. But if it doesn't
14 look like that and a possible bad outcome could be the
15 usual thing, disenchantment.

16 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Describe a situation where
17 you've had to work as part of a group to achieve a common
18 goal. Tell us about the goal, describe your role within
19 the group, and tell us how the group worked or did not
20 work collaboratively to achieve this goal. If you're
21 selected to serve on the Citizens' Redistricting
22 Commission, tell us what you would do to foster
23 collaboration.

24 MS. BLACK: Well, I worked on several things, but
25 the best thing that I could remember that's the most

1 recent was I worked with a group of my fellow residents of
2 the area where I live in the southern sierra to establish
3 a land trust for the purpose of conservation easements.
4 And this was initiated by one of my friend and neighbors
5 who is the sole heir to a large ranch and she has heirs.
6 So she wanted to make sure that her property didn't get
7 subdivided, mainly because it's a very unique region --
8 everyone thinks that about where they live. But still, it
9 is a watershed and in the southern sierra.

10 Anyway, she had this idea. She called around to
11 other people, other landowners and interested renters,
12 whoever, and said would you be interested in helping to
13 form this. So I met with her and what we had to -- and
14 many people had different goals. I don't know what you
15 know about land trusts, but suppose you own 100 acres or
16 however many. But, for instance, the Nature Conservancy
17 only takes huge, huge pieces of property, which didn't
18 serve the interest of this particular person. So suppose
19 you own 100 acres and you would like it to stay as cattle
20 grazing land. You can put a conservation easement on your
21 property with -- and you write, "I want this to remain in
22 cattle grazing, but this house could have up to one more
23 house" -- "this land could have up to one more house built
24 on it, a barn, two more wells," whatever you put. That's
25 up to the person who owns the property.

1 Anyway, land trusts exist to enforce that in
2 perpetuity. So the first thing we had to do was find out
3 how to do a tax exempt nonprofit. I did not do that. But
4 we had people find out. We all read books on land trusts.
5 We had public outreach. I was one of the people who did
6 public outreach. That meant contacting all the other
7 landowners in the area saying, "Would you be interested in
8 doing this or would you object to it being done?" Because
9 clearly if someone does want to develop their property,
10 they may object. Although in the end, it's nice to say,
11 "And we have 2,000 acres of pristine, never getting
12 neighbors right next door to you." People like that. It
13 reduces property taxes for the people who do it. Mainly
14 they sort of stay where they are because they're not
15 developing.

16 Anyway, we had to do that. Was sort of a long
17 process. As it happened, we all had the same goal, so we
18 didn't have a lot of conflict. We had some people that
19 were very concerned with water issues. Everyone is
20 concerned with water issues. And we succeeded and we
21 formed the Tulare Oaks Land Trust, later went together
22 with one on the Kiwia. So now we had the Sequoia River
23 Lands Trust, because we are on the Tulare River and we
24 went together with another one.

25 And on that, I'm still on the easement monitoring

1 team, which means that every one to two years we go out
2 with a GPS and topo maps. And the trust as written for
3 the particular piece of property, we're inspecting. And
4 we go to chosen spots, take pictures, make sure they
5 haven't done anything they're not allowed to do according
6 to their easement.

7 And we didn't have a lot of conflict. And we
8 didn't encounter too much resistance. Once people
9 understood it, it was a matter of in that case explaining
10 it.

11 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

12 MS. BLACK: I have to remember the last part.

13 And the fostering collaboration is mainly to ask
14 people what they want to do, because we kind of -- you
15 know, could you do this. You always do that. But just to
16 make sure that everyone knows the final goal and that the
17 job that they're agreeing to take is something that they
18 actually have an interest in doing and lots of reporting
19 back, and back to listening.

20 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: A considerable amount of
21 the Commission's work will involve meeting with people
22 from all over California who come from very different
23 backgrounds and very different perspectives. If you're
24 selected to serve on the Commission, tell us about the
25 specific skills you possess that will make you effective

1 in interacting with the public.

2 MS. BLACK: Well, I like people, all kinds of
3 people. And I respect their opinions. I'm very
4 interested in what other people's opinions are, because a
5 lot of times they have a better idea than I do or
6 something that I haven't thought of.

7 So I think that's a skill, because a lot of
8 people aren't interested in what -- or people have -- or
9 they've already made up their mind. People are usually
10 comfortable around me and just start talking and tell me
11 all kind of things, if I just listen.

12 And I like to -- they'll talk to me about their
13 ideas. I'm a good listener. I like different ideas.
14 I've had a lot of experience working with different types
15 of people. Where I live, I'm a Democrat in a largely
16 conservative Republican area. And I've lived there for 37
17 years. Fine. And we get along fine with our neighbors.

18 I've tutored a community college basketball team,
19 which was all young men from inner cities mainly from
20 California, but all over the United States from New
21 Orleans, Chicago, Baltimore. And that's a different group
22 of people. And you just have to -- I mean I had one of
23 the college professors say to me one time because I was
24 talking to him about some of my students who are in his
25 class. And he said "well, I don't know how to engage

1 them. How do you engage them?" I just said, "Well, I say
2 hello." And that's usually what you can do.

3 But -- and the other thing that I wanted to make
4 a point of is that sometimes you'll come in and say oh,
5 everyone at this meeting is -- okay. Say they're all
6 white. Everyone at this meeting, they'll all from this
7 county or this area where we're having the meeting. But
8 when you look at any group, you should assume that they're
9 diverse. Their opinions are diverse. Their experiences
10 are diverse. Their ideas about what should be done are
11 diverse. You can't look at a group and say they're all
12 this ethnic group. They're all that one. They're all
13 from here. They all live there, therefore I'm talking to
14 a group that is all -- they think alike. That is not
15 true. Probably if you have two people, your opinions are
16 diverse.

17 So mainly I have the skill of people seem to
18 relate to me. And I can get along with all kind of
19 people.

20 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Mr. Ahmadi.

21 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you.

22 Good morning, Ms. Black.

23 MS. BLACK: Good morning.

24 CHAIR AHMADI: Let me start off with a few
25 follow-up questions about your responses.

1 You mentioned in response to question number one
2 that the skill to postpone judgment is critical --

3 MS. BLACK: Yes.

4 CHAIR AHMADI: -- in the work of the Commission
5 until you get all the information. And that's great.
6 Could you please elaborate on that and let the panel know
7 at what point would you feel comfortable to make decisions
8 and what information do you need to be able to do that?

9 MS. BLACK: Well, I brought these. These are my
10 little maps that you're familiar with undoubtedly. And
11 here's an example.

12 I can look at this and I can see, oh, my
13 goodness. There's hardly any difference between my
14 Assembly district and my Senate district. They're almost
15 identical. And that doesn't read to me like -- even the
16 existing redrawing the lines rules prior to the Voters
17 First Right Act.

18 However, an example of getting all the
19 information would be waiting until all the Census data
20 comes in, look at the rules you have to use to draw the
21 districts. And then it might become clear to me at least
22 how they arrived at this other than party interest.

23 I mean, but it would -- that is mainly waiting
24 until we have the information from the Census, have the
25 public meetings to understand what -- you'll never get all

1 the information. But it's not to say -- okay, suppose I
2 were to get on the Commission. I know how those lines
3 should be drawn. I know everything about the state. They
4 should be drawn so and so, or just as soon as I talk to a
5 few people. No.

6 By that I mean all the things that are required
7 in the redistricting process to look at and know and
8 understand as much as you can. Then, yes, you have to
9 make the decision. And you never know everything. You
10 can't come in thinking you know how to decide.

11 CHAIR AHMADI: I got it.

12 MS. BLACK: That's what I meant.

13 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you so much.

14 You also mentioned in your example in response to
15 question number four, you mentioned about -- I'm sorry.
16 I'm ahead of myself.

17 In response to question number two, you
18 mentioned -- you give the example for the union
19 negotiations for the school district. You said that the
20 school district covers an area of about 900 square miles.

21 MS. BLACK: I think that might be the high school
22 district. I think we're like 793. It's a very large
23 district.

24 CHAIR AHMADI: It's a very large district in
25 Tulare County.

1 MS. BLACK: Yes.

2 CHAIR AHMADI: How is the demographics in that
3 area or school district?

4 MS. BLACK: In that school district when we first
5 moved there, it was largely white, although the high
6 school district that the kids go to is definitely close to
7 minority white, but just because of where the district is.
8 Like it's different now. I mean, it's because the county
9 is mixing better in my opinion.

10 Demographics is everything from second home
11 owners who decided to live there -- I mean, the whole
12 demographic, not just the school. Second home owners,
13 loggers, cattle ranchers, people who work in other -- or
14 Porterville, it's the Springville school district. So
15 Porterville from where I live is 25 miles. But the
16 district ends about twelve miles out of Porterville.
17 People work in the valley: Doctors, attorneys, lots of
18 ranchers. People in little town of Springville which
19 tends to be lower socioeconomic right in town; a variety
20 of people.

21 But when we first moved up there and our children
22 were first going to school there, it was mainly the
23 ranchers -- ranchers, loggers and those were the kids. In
24 fact, kind of to show you what it's like, I would bet that
25 most people when their child go to kindergarten don't get

1 a list of things that aren't acceptable in kindergarten
2 including chewing tobacco. But that's the demographic
3 there. And in the larger district and in the high school
4 district is different.

5 CHAIR AHMADI: And the reason I ask is maybe you
6 can share with us your thoughts about if you can put maybe
7 the issues or the one significant issue for that area that
8 relates to the Commission's work and how the Commission's
9 work will help resolve issues.

10 MS. BLACK: You know, a significant issue for me
11 when I look at it, although when I look at our -- we're
12 lumped with the eastern Sierra Nevada and San Bernardino
13 County. I'm really not sure how that happened. I'm sure
14 it's just a matter of population at the time.

15 CHAIR AHMADI: You mean the two sides of the
16 sierra?

17 MS. BLACK: Yes.

18 CHAIR AHMADI: The east and the west side?

19 MS. BLACK: Yes. And all the way down to San
20 Bernardino County. Actually, clear down this far where --
21 the area where I live is right up here and might have more
22 in common with these.

23 However, it is a ranching area. And so the part
24 that goes out into Tulare County and Kern County. That
25 makes sense because of agriculture.

1 I really think that we can't be the only place
2 where that is true where we have people that have 400
3 children in a 790 square mile school district voting
4 alongside people who live, you know, in San Bernardino
5 County and the more populated -- what is now the more
6 populated area. I'm sure it wasn't originally. I think
7 these are relics maybe from quite a long time ago.

8 But in the case of that -- I don't know if that
9 could be fixed. In the end, it may turn out that
10 there's -- both sides of the sierras. But it's very, very
11 different geographically. And as far as the population.

12 CHAIR AHMADI: Can you think of in any way that
13 the district -- well, let me ask you this question. How
14 would that knowledge help you should you be selected as a
15 Commissioner? And where do you start? What information
16 would you gather? How would you be -- what makes you
17 comfortable to make a decision?

18 MS. BLACK: Once again, you have to look at the
19 Census data and the rules for which are -- I've read over
20 it about three times trying to make sense of it.

21 The reason I think that would make me
22 comfortable, I'm aware of the fact that the district can
23 be drawn strangely or has come to be drawn strangely. So
24 I'm comfortable with the idea of changing it.

25 But how -- what would be the best way in that

1 accuracy, we would have to look at, as the law requires,
2 what comes in from the Census to see what kind of people
3 we have, who has common interests. We all have common
4 interests. I mean, we're all from this state.

5 But, well -- actually, I just had an idea.
6 Perhaps there's more -- we have an Indian reservation in
7 our county very close to where I live. Maybe there are
8 several in this map. I mean, maybe that's how they did
9 it. I don't know.

10 It just makes me comfortable in that I can see
11 that it doesn't make a lot of sense how it is.

12 I'm also aware that after studying all of that
13 you might end up looking not all that different. That's
14 the part where I think people might be disappointed by the
15 time you follow the laws about the Voting Rights Act and
16 the Voters First Act.

17 I would feel comfortable if I looked at all the
18 data that we're going to get making a decision according
19 to what the law requires.

20 I think I'm missing your point maybe.

21 CHAIR AHMADI: You're fine. You're on track.
22 I'm going to have some follow-up questions, but I
23 understood.

24 You mentioned that you're going to use the Census
25 data, and also I believe you mentioned that you're going

1 the determine the interest, the common interests --

2 MS. BLACK: Yes.

3 CHAIR AHMADI: You mentioned that the obvious
4 common interest is that they're all from a single state --

5 MS. BLACK: Yes.

6 CHAIR AHMADI: -- which is California. Could you
7 elaborate on that? What information would you gather and
8 how would you go about identifying the common interests of
9 the people and to what degree that's going to have an
10 impact on your decision?

11 MS. BLACK: Well, it's hard to say to what degree
12 until you've actually heard. But having the public
13 meetings, I have some ideas about that, too. But that's a
14 digression.

15 I think that looking at the Census data helps.
16 And then having the public meetings, knowing -- I have to
17 say what I would do about the whole state. I know a lot
18 about where I live.

19 But if I were on the Commission, I don't live --
20 even though I may know superficially about these other
21 places, I don't live there. That is why the meetings are
22 important and soliciting information from residents and
23 voters and potential voters in these areas. So you have
24 to rely on what do people say. Do they say here in such
25 and such -- here in the western San Joaquin Valley, we're

1 concerned about water. We're all farmers. They're not.
2 But they might possibly have been at some point lumped
3 with something on the coast that doesn't have the concern
4 about water. Things like that where you can see there is
5 water. There's development. There are ethnic
6 differences.

7 Tulare County, particularly Porterville, is a
8 very mixed ethnically. All those things -- and you have
9 to say what is going to give people within the framework
10 of the law as written the things we have. We can't just
11 go in and say I would do this because they're fairly
12 specific. You must consider this, this, and this and hope
13 that people do come to the public meetings and say we
14 don't want to be -- I do not understand why I'm in a
15 district that includes Ventura, parts of Ventura, Los
16 Angeles, and southern San Bernardino County. I don't
17 understand that. I think it was done strictly for
18 population and probably political reasons. And why those
19 people would be happy having as their Assemblywoman a
20 woman who lives in northern Tulare County up in this -- I
21 mean, she's good I'm sure and tries to listen to everyone.

22 But within the possibility -- within what we can
23 do legally, I think it would be nice if people had a
24 common interest. Some of it you can look and say, why did
25 this happen?

1 But as I said, coming to think of it, there may
2 be several Indian reservations there. So they may have
3 thought they have a common interest, so we'll put them
4 together. I didn't think about looking for that until
5 just this morning. But that's the only possible reason I
6 could think why it's all together.

7 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you.

8 Another follow-up question on that. I'm not
9 picking on --

10 MS. BLACK: No. It's all right.

11 CHAIR AHMADI: I'm just using your example so
12 please bear with me.

13 Let's say that you gather all this information
14 and you go to the public meetings and the information that
15 you gather suggests that the district line -- I'm just
16 using this as an example --

17 MS. BLACK: That's fine

18 CHAIR AHMADI: The district line as it was drawn,
19 you know, on the two sides of this mountain range is fine
20 the way it is. Would you be comfortable with that?

21 MS. BLACK: Well, I'd have to be if the data and
22 the public meetings and everything else supported that,
23 particularly if I couldn't see any legal reason or
24 something required by the Act that made us -- that people
25 weren't just comfortable because that's the way it's

1 always been, which -- I would have to be comfortable with
2 that. That's why I say when you find out more, you can
3 sometimes say, oh, okay. Well, it's ugly, but it's going
4 to work and everyone is happy. Unless these people in
5 these other little bitty -- in the other districts wanted
6 to -- you have to look at the whole picture, too.

7 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you very much.

8 How much time do I have left?

9 MS. HAMEL: Seven minutes.

10 CHAIR AHMADI: Seven minutes, good.

11 In your application, you mention that in your
12 county you have seen an increase in one demographic group
13 registering and voting as a result of more candidates
14 running for office who share the same demographics, in
15 this case, ethnicity. What other factors do you think may
16 effect the individuals's interest in registering and
17 voting?

18 MS. BLACK: Besides their demographic group?

19 CHAIR AHMADI: Yes.

20 MS. BLACK: Well, their geographic location,
21 their job opportunities where they are. There are a lot
22 of farm labor. And also farmers who actually have a
23 shared interest, because without -- they're at the
24 opposite economic end of the spectrum most years. But if
25 we don't have the farm labors, we don't have the farmers.

1 We don't have the farmers, we don't have the farm labors.

2 There are cultural -- there are cultural
3 demographics. There are -- in Tulare County, the huge
4 majority that people are poor. So they have that
5 demographic interest in common. And most of us have their
6 interests also at heart, because it's not a good thing.

7 But economic, geographic, ethnic, gay, lesbian,
8 bisexual, all of those things will affect it.

9 But people don't necessarily -- for instance,
10 Hispanic people who are numerous in Tulare County and
11 among my many friends, they don't all vote alike. I mean,
12 they're not all -- many are quite conservative so they
13 actually will vote more conservatively. Others are more
14 liberal. But they still have -- it was just really good.

15 Years ago -- here's an example. About 15 years
16 ago, I was in San Antonio for a meeting. In San Antonio,
17 the town has a very similar ethnic mix to Porterville, the
18 larger town near where I live. When you walk down the
19 street, you would be walking down the street in
20 Porterville, the faces you see. What you notice there --
21 I was looking -- and I always look and read the newspaper.
22 I noticed, my goodness, but the Hispanics have power.
23 They're the mayor. They're on the city council. At that
24 time, there was none of that in Tulare County. And I
25 thought, what have they done besides be there for longer

1 to foster this?

2 And that is the change that has actually happened
3 in Porterville. Now we have Hispanics on their city
4 council. People are voting. People are on the School
5 Board. For a long time, they were wishing the majority --
6 no representation at all. And they weren't voting either.
7 And that's changed.

8 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you.

9 When you compare urban areas with rural areas,
10 what are some of the differences and what are some of the
11 similarities in terms of within the context of
12 redistricting?

13 MS. BLACK: Redistricting? Well, you will still
14 have the same interests. You know, you have economic.
15 You have ethnic. You have, of course, political parties
16 to a certain extent. Although that is less than you might
17 think.

18 But I think the things -- people want to see good
19 roads in a city. They want to see good streets. They
20 want good schools. In the city, they want good schools.
21 They want good schools for everyone, not just certain
22 favored groups. The issues are a bit different. In the
23 city, people are more crowded together. That leads to its
24 own problem.

25 But I think actually other than the differences

1 in the density of population, which exacerbates some
2 interests and maybe makes others less important or at
3 least they think they're less -- if you're in the city,
4 you turn on your water, you assume you have water. This
5 is not true. If you live rurally, water is an interest.
6 Because we can turn on our water and our well isn't --
7 many things -- so we're thinking about water.

8 But other than that, I think a lot of the things
9 are the same. Urban areas have more concentrated crime.
10 Porterville, down where I do substitute teaching, actually
11 this year has had a lot of violent crime.

12 So I think interests are kind of astonishing
13 similar, with the caveat that you're crowded in with a
14 neighbor a little bit more in the city.

15 And I can see when you look at this the Bay Area
16 and L.A., both districts are quite small. As I said on my
17 application, that lets you -- at least you're a
18 representative that has to live in your area, which that's
19 an advantage. They at least drive by. They've at least
20 seen -- if you're in an impoverished district, they at
21 least know it exists. So similar. There are similar
22 interests, but affected by the density of the population.

23 That's probably not the answer you were looking
24 for either.

25 CHAIR AHMADI: What would be -- would you be more

1 challenged to redistrict an urban area versus a rural area
2 should you be selected as a Commissioner?

3 MS. BLACK: I don't think so. I mean, I've spent
4 a lot of time in urban areas. But -- no, that is really
5 hard to say, because in some ways I think urban would be
6 easier. But maybe not.

7 CHAIR AHMADI: Why not?

8 MS. BLACK: Because, well, it might look simpler
9 to me, because I don't live in the middle of San Francisco
10 or something. But as I said, in a way, it would be easier
11 because at least you can -- because of population density,
12 you can make little -- and where you have a rural area
13 because they're supposed to make the numbers equal, you do
14 end up -- maybe the crazily drawn districts are the rural
15 ones. So you don't get these things like this in the
16 urban areas so much. I don't know. I think they would
17 each have their own challenges.

18 CHAIR AHMADI: Let me make sure I understood you
19 correctly. You're saying because of the number of people
20 living in smaller areas, in urban areas, you may have more
21 flexibility in drawing and where to draw the line. Is
22 that what you're saying?

23 MS. BLACK: Yes. Without making it look so --

24 CHAIR AHMADI: Compact?

25 MS. BLACK: Random. They're compact. You have

1 to according to the law look at the population. So you do
2 have a little flexibility there. You don't have to make
3 the thing out here to grab another 5,000 people.

4 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. So population would be your
5 top criteria?

6 MS. BLACK: No. It wouldn't be any --

7 MS. HAMEL: Time.

8 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you.

9 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Ms. Camacho.

10 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you.

11 Hello, Ms. Black. How are you doing?

12 MS. BLACK: I'm fine.

13 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Good. You talked a little
14 bit about your land trust experience. What I'm interested
15 in knowing is were there tasks in setting up that land
16 trust experience that you had that might help you in
17 setting up a Redistricting Commission?

18 MS. BLACK: Well, we all knew each other
19 fairly -- most of us knew each other prior to that. So we
20 knew people skills. And if we didn't, we knew each other
21 well enough to say what our skills were.

22 But we -- in setting up the Commission, we did
23 have to identify skills where we didn't have them. We had
24 to go out and find someone who could instruct us on it,
25 like find an attorney or find -- that was for setting up

1 the nonprofit to make sure we didn't make mistakes. Lure
2 an attorney into joining our group in this case, because
3 we couldn't really hire them.

4 We did, because we couldn't -- in the beginning,
5 it was all volunteer. Then you have to get a certain
6 point and you say, okay, now we can hire a manager part
7 time. But at first it was all volunteer. Yes, I think in
8 turn it is -- when you have a group of people who you are
9 working with, you do have to identify people's strong
10 points, even when you're working with a group that has
11 many shared strong points. And then where they're willing
12 to work. So is that what you're after, setting up the --

13 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Yeah.

14 MS. BLACK: And just figuring out who to go to,
15 who to contact regarding topo maps, things like -- we can
16 all read them. But -- yes.

17 Just essentially the task of helping to identify
18 the strong people -- point of the people who are working
19 and making sure they're willing to do the job that we
20 assign them.

21 It was a very collaborative -- it's hard for me
22 to say well, I did this. I did this. No. We did it.

23 So from what I can remember, that's the kind of
24 thing we did. We identified what we needed. We need
25 this. We need that. We need to talk to land trusts all

1 over the United States and in the west particularly to
2 find out possible issues. We need to talk to the public.
3 We need to talk to our neighbors, those types of things,
4 to find out -- mainly looking at the job at hand that you
5 have and say, okay. Where do we need to get someone else
6 to help us with this?

7 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: How would you use that
8 experience as a Commissioner on the Redistricting
9 Commission?

10 MS. BLACK: In the beginning to set it up?

11 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Yes.

12 MS. BLACK: It's clear to me that we will need
13 legal counsel that is experienced in this, in
14 redistricting. And we'll need, as far as I understand it
15 from what I've read -- from what I know so far, we'll need
16 people who are good with programming. People who
17 understand the current redistricting. I assume there
18 are -- maybe they mention there are programs -- computer
19 programs for helping with redistricting. Essentially
20 sitting there figuring out what we need. What kind of
21 offices we need. What kind of communications we would do.
22 What people are comfortable with.

23 Thank goodness in this group, because of the way
24 you've done it, everybody is comfortable with computers
25 and the internet. My husband is currently serving on a

1 grand jury and there are three people that don't have
2 internet at all and don't believe in computers. That's
3 limiting for them.

4 But just planning out where to have meetings, how
5 often to have them, where to have. We are kind of -- in
6 the public meetings that we would have, should everyone
7 go? Should only people from that part of the state go?
8 Should we have -- what kind of notification?

9 There's a lot of things you can plan ahead. And
10 those are the kind of things I think that could have to be
11 done besides the complex method of if you're in the first
12 eight, those people in the first eight have a series -- if
13 it goes as planned in the thing that was issued for public
14 comment, the process for doing it, then they have to be
15 trained and then pick their six. And then from there,
16 just sit down and mainly getting place -- a room, offices,
17 attorneys, staff. And as much as possible, planning the
18 year. That those are the kind of things I think need to
19 be done first.

20 I'm probably leaving out something really
21 critical.

22 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Another thing you brought up
23 was the discussion of the remaining six. If you were one
24 of the eight individuals selected, the original eight, how
25 would you go about selecting the remaining six?

1 MS. BLACK: Well, as I understand it, suppose
2 it's narrowed down to 36 and then the eight people get
3 drawn from that. That would leave 28. So you have 28
4 people, and you have the eight people who's names have
5 been drawn.

6 I think that the group should continue to abide
7 by the intent of the Act and try to keep it balanced with
8 your remaining six. Not just take, oh, say, Republicans
9 or all the Independents. You have to keep it balanced.

10 Try to continue to keep an ethnic balance and
11 educate -- you know, try to keep it a well-balanced thing
12 so you continue to have the face of the Commission look as
13 much as possible like the face of California within the
14 other -- and if you have a hole in talent or something,
15 you might also keep that in mind when hopefully in your
16 balance you can find, okay, look. Here's a person that
17 has a thing that we've noticed that we're lacking in
18 addition to fulfilling these other requirements.

19 I really don't think with the people that have
20 ended up -- I mean, the ones that I have been able to
21 watch a portion of their interview, I think it should --
22 with good intent, it should go well.

23 But I think we're required to continue to
24 maintain the spread of it according to how the Voters
25 First Act intend it to be. So that we don't get a -- so

1 we're not getting a majority to one party or the other.

2 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. You brought up your
3 experience with the basketball team tutoring. Could you
4 describe how your basketball team tutoring gave you
5 insight regarding inner city youth and what bearing might
6 this have on the Commission?

7 MS. BLACK: You know, that was something that --
8 I did that -- the whole time I was doing it, I kept
9 thinking if I had known how much I would enjoy doing this
10 and if I lived near a big university, I would have tried
11 to get the job as the tutor -- academic tutor for a team
12 because I enjoyed it so much. And they were so great.
13 And I still keep in contact with the players that I can
14 find I that had.

15 But mainly they just would talk to me. I mean,
16 we'd do the algebra or whatever. But they were -- the
17 young men that I had were from Washington, D.C., L.A., the
18 Bay Area, Sacramento, New Orleans, Chicago, Baltimore.
19 And once they get to know you, they'll just talk. Say,
20 "Well, what is that tattoo?" "That's for my cousin who
21 was killed." I say, "Oh. How did that happen?" And
22 then -- and it's -- try and encourage them. When you --
23 "When you can, when you settle down, register to vote.
24 Try to make a difference. There will be a difference."

25 And at that time I really wish that I would

1 have -- still been doing it recently. No one who is from
2 black -- no one from inner city can ever get anywhere
3 because my cousin, my brother, my -- and even young men
4 whose families were actually quite successful tended to
5 have one at least one person in jail. And they had this
6 idea that even though their moms and dads had been saying
7 you can do this, and this was the most -- the people, for
8 instance, were successful; the father a lawyer, the mother
9 a teacher and -- but they had all of these -- yes, but of
10 this -- this will happen, that had happened. I won't be
11 able to do that. And look what they did when they re-did
12 the school districts in Washington, D.C. They closed all
13 the black ones and kept the white ones open, and my mother
14 said, blah, blah, blah.

15 But the main -- and their joke to me -- I said,
16 "Well you should have a different career besides
17 basketball in mind because very few people go on and
18 become" -- "Well, I'm going to do" -- "Well, what will you
19 do if a car hits you if you go outside today and you're in
20 a wheelchair?" "Well, then I'll sell drugs on the corner
21 because people will feel sorry for me." And they were
22 joking.

23 But, you know, I would say no, you -- so it's
24 just like a completely different experience. A place
25 where it makes sense maybe to run from the police. A

1 place where, you know, maybe grow up in a crack house or
2 something.

3 So for those people to vote, you'd have to just
4 say the whole thing. If you keep trying. Prove people
5 wrong. If you get as much education as you can. If you
6 get a job. If you don't do that. If you go -- if you
7 take part in the system, this doesn't have to keep going
8 like it is.

9 It's really a really hard to make that speech
10 because in the back of your mind you're also thinking but,
11 if all around you there's crack houses. Your mom is in a
12 crack house. I would have this thing in the back of my
13 mind saying just let it not happen that you go back there.

14 But it was very interesting for me. And, you
15 know, a lot of them already had three or four children.
16 And so it was just a case of just saying keep going. Keep
17 trying. Go to school. Get your AA. Go on. Get your BA.
18 It will open doors. And it was very interesting.

19 On the other hand, I worked with a lot of
20 children in my life, 4-H and substitute teaching. And I
21 never had a single day when I left at the end of the
22 day -- never once did I leave where they didn't all say
23 thanks. Thank you. Thank you. So I always thought
24 that's good. Because where that exists, the potential for
25 breaking out of this exists.

1 So it was -- it was very eye opening for me. You
2 can read about those things. You can watch the wire or
3 whatever you want. It's really different from coming
4 every day and talking to somebody who's been there and
5 managed to at least get out far enough to play college
6 ball at the community college level and maybe have a
7 chance. Very interesting.

8 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: How do you think that
9 experience tutoring those inner city kids would help you
10 as a Commissioner?

11 MS. BLACK: Well, I'm comfortable talking to
12 them. I mean, it would be -- because I understand that
13 the difficulty is kind of -- like in Tulare County, for a
14 lot of time you couldn't get Hispanic people to go vote.
15 They wouldn't. They didn't see any point in it. Of
16 course, there's always some who do.

17 But I can understand how you can be in a city and
18 actually have a district drawn more or less for your
19 interest group, for your ethnic group, for your economic,
20 socio economic group and still not vote, and not register.
21 So I understand that can happen. But I know also know it
22 can be changed.

23 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Do you think this experience
24 with the inner city individuals will help you when you go
25 out to public meetings to maybe empower these groups?

1 MS. BLACK: I would really hope so. I think that
2 it is changing already. I mean, even in my lifetime, the
3 changes that I've seen, because it's easy to get very
4 depressed and think we are not getting anywhere. And then
5 if I go back and look at things from the 60s and 70s, we
6 are. We are getting somewhere and it's happening faster.
7 I think so.

8 I just think you just don't -- you have to assume
9 that people will want to take part in determining their
10 life. And you have to assume that if they believe that
11 their vote will count because their district -- I wrote
12 this in my application. Because they had a chance to vote
13 for someone from an area who at least understands what
14 they're going through, then people will vote.

15 It's a frustration of thinking it's not going
16 to -- what good is it, because the other people in my
17 district have no idea what I'm going through.

18 Hopefully we don't really have any inner city
19 areas that are that huge that it would be -- but we do. I
20 mean -- so you just have to keep telling people we hope
21 that this helps you. We're going to try to draw the lines
22 as far as legal to include everyone. And we hope that you
23 will respond in kind by taking part in this system.
24 Trying to solve a problem by voting.

25 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

1 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thanks.

2 Is there anything in your life that would
3 prohibit or impair your ability to perform all the duties
4 of a Commissioner?

5 MS. BLACK: I forgot to answer that. I'm sorry.

6 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: That's okay. That's why I
7 am asking.

8 MS. BLACK: Not as far as I know. Anyone can be
9 struck by lightening, hit by a truck. But no, not in my
10 life as it exists now.

11 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: How would you set up the
12 Commission if you're a Commissioner to ensure that the
13 time line for the Commission is met?

14 MS. BLACK: Wow, I would only be one of 14. The
15 way to do that is to look at that time line. Once you get
16 your people, look at the time line. Write it down and
17 say, okay. Do we have to be at this point and hope that
18 it works. We have to be at this at Point D by -- these
19 aren't the dates. Say we have to be at Point D by May
20 15th, Point C by April 1st, Point B by February 15th, and
21 Point A January 10th. And say look what has to be done
22 for that to happen. Write it down. And it's cumulative,
23 because to do the second one you probably have to be
24 finished with the first.

25 But write out a chart with your tasks and look at

1 it and think -- try to estimate how much time each thing
2 is going to take and try to allow -- really I say this --
3 allow a little wiggle room. There is no wiggle room.

4 Certainly you of all people know that it's got to
5 have been insane for last few months. But there isn't a
6 lot -- it's going to have to be work, work, work, work,
7 work for everyone until we're done.

8 But the way to hopefully get everything done on
9 time is just to once we have our group sit down with a
10 calendar, write it out, and take a good look at it and
11 say, okay. First things first. What has to be done?
12 Most things look really scary at first. But once you get
13 into them, if everyone is willing to work -- and I think
14 whoever ends up, certainly the people that are left are
15 going to work. And they get to work.

16 But as a group, sit down and look at each step
17 and think, what is required to do this step? Will we need
18 computer programs? Will we need maps? Will we need
19 meetings? Each little deadline is going to be
20 different -- until it really just all piles on.

21 Get started right away. That's another thing.
22 But I, as a Commissioner by myself, couldn't do any of it.
23 It's going to be a group of people. So -- but I think
24 everyone will have similar -- certainly everyone will
25 realize that we have to be organized.

1 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you. That was my last
2 question.

3 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Ms. Spano.

4 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Good morning.

5 MS. BLACK: Good morning.

6 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: I was going to go back to
7 your tutoring at the Porterville College basketball team.
8 I know you mentioned on your application about challenges
9 you experienced when you spent time promoting
10 participation in the political system to young men who
11 grow up believing the system did not want them to
12 participate. Can you tell us a little bit about that
13 challenge.

14 MS. BLACK: A lot of my time I spent actually
15 listening to them. They were, you know, large people. A
16 lot of time my time was spent saying, "Those are great
17 shoes. Are they size five" -- you know, the challenges
18 would be in -- I let them talk a lot, I mean when we were
19 done with whatever we had to do hopefully.

20 And -- or I'd be working go to the library or
21 something to get them going on research and things. It
22 would be well -- and then some of them particularly would
23 be full of -- full of really legitimate complaints.

24 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Such as?

25 MS. BLACK: Well, such as, "I'm black. I'm

1 growing up in the inner city. I don't have an education
2 yet. I see that we have no power. I see that things are
3 stacked against us."

4 You know, you really can't -- unless you are
5 willfully blind, you can't say, "Oh, pull yourself up by
6 your boot straps. You'll be just fine. Where there is a
7 will, there's a way." Those are like meaningless to a
8 person who is living that life. And they made a first
9 step.

10 I actually did come to have a completely
11 different attitude about college sports than I had before,
12 because always before I thought -- and I still kind of
13 think this. What a waste of money. College is for
14 education and everything. But now I see for some people
15 that is at least a temporary ticket out of where you're
16 living where things look hopeless and you can see other
17 people. And you meet other people from your same ethnic
18 group who haven't lived like that. And you can see people
19 succeeding, even if you don't finish your college degree.
20 Even if all you get is three or four years out of that
21 environment to see other possibilities and learn to work
22 with people in a team and learn to be part of something
23 bigger than you are. That was very eye opening for me.

24 But anyway, it's hard because they say, "Why
25 should I do it?" Well, like the one young man whose

1 mother is a teacher in Washington, D.C., said, "My mom has
2 been a teacher and she's seen class size reduction happen
3 here in the northwest but not -- but not in this other
4 part." So those were the things. It's really hard to
5 say.

6 But a lot of them really weren't like that. A
7 lot of kids were going to school in the bad part of
8 Chicago, but they had a really solid family. Other kids
9 didn't have a solid family but had friends who did. Just
10 the challenges were to say, "Yes, I know it looks awful.
11 I agree with you." I did agree with them. I agree with
12 you it seems really hopeless. I agree with you that the
13 education system is kind of a scandal in inner cities, not
14 just for black kids in inner cities, but inner city
15 schools tend to be falling apart frequently. It's a
16 challenge for the people who work there and a bigger
17 challenge for the students who go there.

18 But just to keep saying the more education you
19 get, the more you try to -- the more you try to take part,
20 the better it will be. And please believe in yourself.

21 The thing that was astonishing to me was the
22 number of students that I encountered who were smart but
23 had very minimal skills. And I would say, "Didn't they
24 have rules to play sports when you were in high school?
25 Didn't you have to get a certain grade point?" The kids

1 in California I knew mainly there are some rules.

2 "Yes. We had to have a 2.0."

3 "How did that happen? I want to know how you got
4 a C average, because you don't have these writing skills
5 and you're smart."

6 "Well, I don't know. I just kept getting Cs."

7 That's the kind of thing that is a real
8 disservice to the people who are being passed along.

9 So I would have to say, "Okay. You can do it and
10 you're going to learn how to write because you can talk
11 because you're smart. You can understand a whole game's
12 worth of things. You can learn. And then if you can
13 learn, then you can get a better job. Then you can take
14 part."

15 And they would call me from like after class or
16 something, "Guess the grade that I get on my essay written
17 in class with no help. I got an 86 percent." They were
18 thrilled.

19 These would be people who did not know. And in
20 their case because they're young, you know, they just
21 didn't know they could do it.

22 So from that it's -- and they have -- not
23 everyone graduated from college, but most of them are out.
24 They have good jobs. They're functioning. They're taking
25 part. But the thing to get over is that hopelessness

1 which is based -- in many cases from any kind of very poor
2 background, it's based on fact. It's a pretty hopeless
3 situation. And I see it also where I substitute at the
4 high schools.

5 One of the high schools, in particular, many,
6 many of the kids are in the system. And you'll have
7 three -- you'll have 30 kids and maybe twelve of them are
8 in foster care. So that's just to keep encouraging them
9 and to try to be positive. I always try to be positive.
10 If I see them outside of the classroom, I ask them about
11 something I know, because I'm just a sub. So I can just
12 notice little things like they're here. I don't have to
13 worry if at the end of the year they can pass the test.
14 Say, "How's your music coming?" "I like your hair." "I
15 see you've lost a little weight," if it was a girl who
16 ways previously heavy or something. "Are you happy where
17 you are?"

18 To encourage them, because a lot of young people,
19 particularly coming from really impoverished backgrounds
20 are hopeless. And they actually have good reason to be
21 hopeless. But there is hope. So I would just try to keep
22 encouraging that.

23 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: You have the advantage of
24 having this one-on-one ability with these students to be
25 getting to their head and convince them that they can do

1 anything they want. They have a voice. How do you
2 prepare -- how do you plan to prepare to go out into the
3 communities in a larger setting reaching out to the youth
4 that maybe are not registered voters or don't have that
5 family foundation, to encourage them in involvement by
6 individuals and citizens like you to give them this
7 insight? How do you plan to reach out to these
8 communities and convince them that redistricting is
9 important. Voting is important and why?

10 MS. BLACK: In some ways, it's the same because I
11 give the same -- I'm sure to them they think, "Oh, God.
12 Here she goes again." I give the same kind of talk to a
13 large classroom of students or 20 players at once or you
14 know -- that I do to the individuals. I just try to say
15 that, "You can do it."

16 Part of this is one of the things that I -- in
17 getting people to come to the meetings, a lot of people
18 have mentioned that they would use internet. But many,
19 many people don't have the computer at home. They don't
20 use the internet. They're not comfortable with it.

21 So I was thinking that, first of all, you have to
22 get people to the meetings. If they're old enough to
23 vote, you can use community college bulletin boards. You
24 can use public service announcements on the public radio,
25 public TV, but also AM and the other more commonly watched

1 programs. You can have things in the newspaper, public --
2 and mainly just reach out and try to get people to the
3 meetings. It's very hard to motivate young people who
4 don't think they need to vote. I have three children and
5 I thought I'd never get my youngest. I kept say, "You
6 will register to vote or I will kill you."

7 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Of course you couldn't say
8 that to all the citizens.

9 MS. BLACK: No. No. You can't say that.

10 But even so, although he did register, it took
11 him quite a while to get to the point where he started
12 thinking, oh, it makes a difference. That's from a family
13 where we are vote all the times. And his older siblings
14 vote.

15 The same type of thing -- but trying to get the
16 information out and letting teachers at poly psy and
17 things like that at the college -- and seniors at high
18 school, they're about ready to vote -- before that, no
19 matter what you say, I'm not sure that you can -- it's
20 kind of an apathetic time of life in some ways. But to
21 just use the education and hope they turn out.

22 And if you see -- oh, the other thing I had
23 thought -- because a lot of people are very shy about at a
24 meeting participating. It really has helped -- that we
25 found this when I've been involved in other things, public

1 meetings, if there is someone at the back handing out like
2 a little card like this and saying, "If you have a
3 question or comment, would you like to write it on this?"
4 And then go around and collect those and kind of take a
5 look at them. And if you answer, they tend to be similar.
6 But ways that people can interact without speaking up,
7 especially young people can be really shy if they don't
8 know you or -- you know, or they're afraid they won't look
9 cool. It's true.

10 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

11 You mentioned earlier about your response to
12 number four of the standard questions that in your
13 easement -- the conservation issues, you're part of the
14 easement monitoring team.

15 MS. BLACK: Yes.

16 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: And you use GPS and you
17 inspect the sites to make sure they're doing what they're
18 supposed to do.

19 MS. BLACK: Yeah.

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Can you elaborate on that
21 and your skills that you've learned from using this
22 equipment?

23 MS. BLACK: Well, I learned that GPS isn't always
24 exactly right. Mainly, you have to be -- I already was
25 able to read topo maps. But in the southern sierra in the

1 foothills, they're not like the foothills up here. 2,000
2 feet you usually can look at a 10,000 foot mountain fairly
3 close in front of you. But the land --

4 So essentially we would have two or three people.
5 We'd have to walk over like 800 acres in a couple of hours
6 in the morning hopefully not too late in the season so
7 there's no snakes and it's not hot and there's no burrs.

8 But essentially it's an ability to look at a
9 photograph. It's one or two years later, so the trees may
10 have grown. Find the GPS place where you think you're
11 supposed to be, if the GPS is working. And then walk
12 around in a 100-foot diameter circle finding the marker
13 and taking a photograph if anything has changed.

14 We haven't had -- no one has died yet. The
15 problem -- the problem is when the land owners who created
16 the conservation easement, when they die or pass on, the
17 property -- they can sell their property. But the
18 easement goes with it in perpetuity. They can't be
19 broken. And I mean, it's very hard. I think it's rarely
20 happened.

21 Actually, conservation land easements are quite
22 old in the United States. I think the oldest one is a
23 couple hundred years old. It's surprising.

24 Anyway, that will be the problem, because new
25 owners then may -- when you think a lot can happen in

1 twelve months. So if we go out there sometime and see a
2 house being built where one shouldn't be or where there
3 should be no house on that property -- it depends on how
4 they write their easement. Then, of course, it's out of
5 our hands. We document everything, and it goes to the
6 attorneys.

7 But those skills -- and you know crawling through
8 fences. But the main thing is a mapping and the use of
9 GPS and the understanding.

10 I actually this year worked also for the Census
11 Bureau in May and June. And that was after my application
12 went in. And the only people who will go into the
13 mountains are people who live there. They can't get other
14 people to do it.

15 And I waited for a long time because I kept
16 thinking certainly someone needs this job more than I do.
17 And then I thought they kept advertising so I went in and
18 that was again a case of looking at some really terrible
19 maps. And there would be no map, no address, and just a
20 description. And going down long two-mile driveways and
21 knocking on doors and hoping that ax murderers didn't live
22 there.

23 But that was also a case of -- and also being
24 able to speak to people under duress. One reason why no
25 one will go in the mountains is a lot of people do not

1 like the government up there. So you have to go there and
2 then they come out all cranky and say, "It's you." So
3 they want a familiar face.

4 It's similar skills, looking at the maps, finding
5 things, and talking to the diverse people in small hostile
6 groups.

7 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: You just went by yourself?

8 MS. BLACK: Yes.

9 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: And how long did you do
10 this?

11 MS. BLACK: I did it from the beginning of May
12 until we were almost done -- they sort of cut it off early
13 until June. I think the last day I worked was like the
14 11th or something.

15 We had late snows. There were four feet of snow
16 at the top so I would go up -- there was a loop road that
17 goes like this, but the top was snowed until after the
18 Census was over. So I'd have to go up one side and back
19 and down the other. But --

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: What motivated you to do
21 that? Because it seems a little dangerous, a lot of the
22 conditions don't seem appealing. I'm not sure if I would
23 want to do that.

24 MS. BLACK: It would depend. They would have
25 sent you to your neighborhood. They like to keep people

1 in their neighborhood.

2 Well, I kind of always wondered what it was like.
3 And it had been -- my youngest son has worked for them off
4 and on for a year and a half doing various thing. I
5 thought, well, it would be interesting. And then after
6 that, it was -- I'm familiar -- you find places you didn't
7 know existed, but I'm familiar with the area.

8 But I thought it would be hard to count. And,
9 really, I don't think a person who didn't live up there
10 could ever -- there were several of us from that very
11 small community who actually worked for the Census Bureau,
12 and we were probably the only people who do find some of
13 the places. Some of them I had never seen. Completely
14 unaware of some of them.

15 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Knowing that you may not --
16 I don't know about this. When the Commission does its
17 redistricting work, I'm not sure to what extent they're
18 going to be crawling under fences.

19 MS. BLACK: We weren't supposed to crawl in.
20 That was for the other one. We could only go through if
21 the gate was unlocked.

22 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: But to the extent that maybe
23 this redistricting and drawing may be limited just to GIS
24 and electronic configuring of the redistricting, how
25 comfortable will you feel knowing that you can't get your

1 hands on it and see it --

2 MS. BLACK: Oh, my goodness. That is what
3 technology is for. Why would you do that if you didn't
4 have to? I'm very comfortable with that. I believe in
5 modern science.

6 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Did you say I have five
7 minutes. Three, okay. Oh, boy. Let's see.

8 On the salary negotiations example, describe for
9 us the negotiations and what it took to arrive at
10 consensus. In your application, you mentioned that for
11 the first few minutes, every person in the room is alert
12 for the slightest hint of discrimination. Can you explain
13 that to me?

14 MS. BLACK: Well, we were really lucky, because
15 in general, we got along very well at this time. And when
16 I was on the Board, the administration, the teachers, and
17 the -- all the Board -- my mom was a teacher. I know
18 that's very rare that we did get along most of the time.

19 It's just that when it's salary negotiation time,
20 everyone has their -- the teachers of course want more
21 money. They deserve more money. And the Board is limited
22 in what they have, depending on what's coming from the
23 State. So the teachers come in, and they're convinced --
24 they would be convinced -- and I don't blame them -- that
25 we were maybe hiding money or lying about how much there

1 was. It's really difficult. And we would try to always
2 plan.

3 So they're expecting that you're just -- even
4 though their whole rest of the year their relationship
5 with you is different, they are expecting that you are out
6 to just do -- give them the least possible money. And so
7 you have to be really careful there in the beginning to
8 try and ameliorate that feeling that people have. That is
9 why we had that one instance when the two people on the
10 Board -- president and the unhappy negotiator were not
11 people who got along that well to begin with and fell
12 apart quickly. But only that once.

13 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: You state that you consulted
14 with state officials in your application. Are you still
15 in contact with these state officials and any other
16 elected officials?

17 MS. BLACK: Oh, no. Gosh. I have been off --
18 any elected officials anywhere?

19 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Anywhere in the state of
20 California.

21 MS. BLACK: No. No. Those would be when we
22 would have to consult with, like, county counsel or we
23 would be wanting to expand our school district and you
24 have to have people from the State come down and ride
25 around to your various sites. And I did come up a couple

1 of times I think for -- there is a convention or something
2 in September for school districts.

3 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Not a lobbyist ever?

4 MS. BLACK: Oh, no. No.

5 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

6 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Panelists, are there
7 follow-up questions?

8 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I don't have any.

9 CHAIR AHMADI: I don't have any.

10 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: I have a couple for you.

11 You talked in your application about having
12 served on three juries.

13 MS. BLACK: Uh-huh. Yes.

14 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: I wondered if you could
15 tell me, not in detail, but what kind of trials were they.
16 How long did they last? What was that experience like?

17 MS. BLACK: All right. I was on a murder trial,
18 and actually I was an alternate. But have to sit there
19 through everything until the very, very end. It lasted a
20 couple of weeks.

21 And it was a case by the way where you had to --
22 if ever anyone looked like our mental picture of someone
23 who would kill his wife, the defendant did. So I kept
24 having to say to myself, just because he looks like that,
25 that doesn't mean - there's many, many people who look

1 that way who have not shot their wives. Perhaps he did
2 not.

3 And that was a very interesting trial. Lasted a
4 couple of weeks. It was odd in that they had a -- there
5 was jury misconduct. If I had been on the final part of
6 the jury, I would have -- in fact, I would have had to say
7 something.

8 But as it turned out, it was a hung jury.
9 Because I was waiting -- and then later the same man was
10 retried and convicted. And then later, he was retried and
11 because of a mistrial retried and acquitted. But by then
12 this time was in jail for another crime and was -- but it
13 was odd, because a case of sitting there and thinking I
14 don't see how she shot herself, which is what he claimed
15 without too many details.

16 But it was many, many years ago. And I see how
17 he did it. And I wonder what really happened. And it
18 was -- I just really swore I would never be on another
19 murder trial.

20 And then we had a drug case where the jury
21 concluded that the police had put the -- the guy was
22 acquitted. We all thought that the drugs were planted,
23 because of the man's history and he had previously been --
24 it was strange.

25 And another one on -- I'm trying to remember what

1 the other one was.

2 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Was it criminal or civil?

3 MS. BLACK: They were criminal. It was a
4 criminal one.

5 And I think that one the man pled guilty part way
6 through the trial. And it was funny, because everyone on
7 the jury so far would never have voted for conviction. So
8 it just shows that you don't always -- and there was
9 another one, too, but I can't remember the other one at
10 all.

11 There's -- for some reason, I'm one of those
12 people who every year gets a notice. And I look
13 convincible, so I almost always get -- at least don't get
14 thrown off instantly.

15 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Did you have expert
16 testimony in any of those cases?

17 MS. BLACK: Yes. In the murder trial, lots of
18 expert testimony on what happens to body parts when you're
19 hit with a shotgun.

20 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: It sounds to me based upon
21 the conversation that you've had with our panelists that
22 you're planning to use your work on the Commission almost
23 two-fold: One, to get the job done; and two, to inspire
24 people to maybe start participating. And I think that's a
25 great idea and something I hadn't really thought of. But

1 I wonder what if your fellow Commissioners say, "Listen,
2 Katie, we don't have time for the rah-rah."

3 MS. BLACK: That's fine. I'm not planning to use
4 it to inspire them. That is something that I hope would
5 be a result of it well done.

6 You know -- and the only reason I would bring it
7 up in a public meeting is to say if you want government to
8 be more effective, now is your chance. Speak up if you
9 can think of something that we need to consider.
10 Otherwise, no. You know, you can't. But well done, it
11 should have that effect maybe if you can ever get some
12 people to participate.

13 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: You raise horses. I have
14 a relative who raises horses, and I know he can pretty
15 much never leave the ranch. Will you be able to travel up
16 and down the state?

17 MS. BLACK: My husband is retired now. I'm also
18 down to only six horses, so it's a -- and no stallions, so
19 it's a lot easier to get people to do feeding when you
20 don't have 26 horses.

21 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: You have a letter of
22 recommendation from a woman named Alexandria Marquez.

23 MS. BLACK: Uh-huh.

24 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: And in the letter she
25 talks about how the two of you first met when she was

1 working at a restaurant that you used to frequent for
2 meetings and gathering. And I wondered how you know her
3 now.

4 MS. BLACK: I know her now, because I know her
5 family now. She met me then -- I met her mom then --
6 actually her mother -- this was her parents' restaurant.
7 But I went to school with her mother's younger sister,
8 which it took a while for all of this to -- you know, if
9 you live in the same place forever, these connections keep
10 coming up. But I got to be really good friends with her
11 mother. Her mother is the one that I encouraged to run
12 for School Board. And I still know her, because I'm
13 friends with the family.

14 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: I don't have any
15 additional questions. Panelists?

16 CHAIR AHMADI: Neither do I.

17 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: We have about seven
18 minutes remaining on the clock if you care to make a
19 closing statement.

20 MS. BLACK: I didn't leave time for that.

21 I would love to do this. But I think that the
22 other people that where I watched little bits and I've
23 read people's -- some applications -- you could spend your
24 whole life doing this. You have been spending your whole
25 life doing this. I think it would be a great honor. I

1 would be thrilled to do it.

2 I'm satisfied that whichever 14 people that you
3 end up with will do an equally good job. And I think that
4 that all rests upon the wonderful job that the three of
5 you and you have done already in making it so open. And I
6 thought it couldn't have been done better. So thank you.

7 It would be -- thank you not from my point of
8 view as a person sitting here applying, but thank you as a
9 citizen of California for trying so hard to follow -- to
10 grow with the spirit and make everything so open.

11 And it's been a wonderful experience just going
12 through and seeing this. I would like to do it. I think
13 it's a very important work. And I hope it has a desired
14 outcome of making people more comfortable with taking part
15 in actually voting.

16 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Thank you so much for
17 coming to see us, Ms. Black. Let's recess until 10:59.

18 (Thereupon the Panel recessed at 10:39 a.m.)

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1 10:59 a.m.

2 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: The hour being 10:59, we
3 are back on the record.

4 Today we have with us Velveth Schmitz. And are you
5 ready to begin?

6 MS. SCHMITZ: Yeah.

7 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Wonderful. Please start
8 the clock.

9 What specific skills do you believe a good
10 Commissioner should possess?

11 Of those skills, which do you possess?

12 Which do you not possess and how will you
13 compensate for it?

14 Is there anything in your life that would
15 prohibit or impair your ability to perform the duties of a
16 Commissioner?

17 MS. SCHMITZ: There is nothing in my life that
18 would prohibit or impair me from doing the duties. And I
19 took that seriously in the beginning to make sure that
20 that was the case.

21 The skills that I think a good Commissioner
22 should possess probably are three things:

23 Active listening, I think that the ability to
24 hear information and actually hear it is important.

25 The second thing is discernment. I think having

1 the ability to take that information and have an objective
2 view of it is very important.

3 And the third: Analytical thinking. You have to
4 be able to take information and decipher what's important,
5 what isn't. What needs to be accounted.

6 The trickier part is how many do I possess and
7 how many do I not. And I think the truth is I possess all
8 and I don't have them all. It is very tricky to stay in
9 active listening for every second of every day. So I
10 think being aware, that's something that I need to do is
11 both sides of the fence.

12 The discernment, again, I come -- two things with
13 subjectivity based on my life, my background, things that
14 have affected me. And I try really hard to have
15 discernment, so I'm not making decisions based on my
16 historical past or things that have effected me. And the
17 success of that depends how present I am and how much I'm
18 working to be in the moment and not bring my other stuff
19 into it.

20 And analytical thinking I've done a lot of in
21 college. I'm a business owner and then through work, I
22 think those are one of the skills that I do -- I possess.

23 I also will say that when you have a lot of
24 information in front of you, it's very tricky to sort of
25 get stuck in the what's important, what isn't, what are we

1 supposed to be paying attention to. So I would say I have
2 them all. I know how to utilize them. And do I do it 100
3 percent of the time? No. But I'm willing to continue to
4 try.

5 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Describe a circumstance
6 from your personal experience where you had to work with
7 others to resolve a conflict or difference of opinion.
8 Please describe the issue and explain your role in
9 addressing and resolving the conflict. If you are
10 selected to serve on the Citizen's Redistricting
11 Commission, tell us how you would resolve conflicts that
12 may arise among the Commissioners.

13 MS. SCHMITZ: This was actually a shocking
14 conflict in my life. When my husband and I had our first
15 child, we both had very clear ideas of how we wanted to
16 raise that child. And they didn't happen to meet at all.
17 So I was actually shocked that not everybody wants to
18 raise their children like I did.

19 I think one of the most amazing things that we
20 could do as parents was come together and really
21 communicate. And we sort of took a step back and were
22 open to hearing what was really important to each other,
23 what our long-term goals and ideals for our children were.
24 And from there were really honest about we don't know
25 about what we are going to do. And how do we get

1 information.

2 We were able to implore resources available to
3 us. We started taking parenting classes and read a lot of
4 different books.

5 And I think that the key component of resolving
6 the conflict and coming together was communication. We
7 felt safe in voicing differences. We felt safe in having
8 a debate. We were both very respectful of where the
9 person was coming and acknowledged that to them this was
10 really important. So having someone respect you while
11 you're having that communication made a big difference for
12 us.

13 And I think I tend to be the leader in our
14 household. I take things by the horns and this is what
15 we're going to do.

16 I feel I'm very good at listening to the rest of
17 my household. So I think in conflict resolution I often
18 tend to play a leader role, but I'm not afraid to sit back
19 and listen and let someone else resolve a situation.

20 If I was on the Commission, how would I resolve
21 conflicts? I think that conflict arises particularly when
22 people don't feel heard. Sometimes individuals are saying
23 the exact same thing and an argument will ensue because
24 they're not really listening to each other. And I think
25 creating a space where people felt respected, heard, and

1 had the ability to communicate is really important.

2 I think helping to foster that is an important
3 roll. And at times, really sort of reminding people that
4 we're in an environment where we should be respectful of
5 one another. I think that people come to any situation
6 with the best intention. And you can judge that as you
7 will, but they feel as strongly as you do they're doing
8 the right thing.

9 So I think making them feel heard, having an open
10 dialogue, and then bringing -- even if your way doesn't
11 happen, I think a lot can be said for feeling heard and
12 then saying well, if you guys don't agree, at least I feel
13 like I had my chance.

14 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: How will the Commission's
15 work impact the state? Which of these impacts will
16 improve the state the most? And is there any potential
17 for the Commission's work to harm the state? And if so,
18 in what ways?

19 MS. SCHMITZ: So I think there's pretty huge
20 impact. Initially, I think that this Commission does
21 provide a platform for citizens to be heard. That is a
22 really powerful thing, and also a dangerous thing as I
23 will address later.

24 But I think the work of the Commission will --
25 the impacts of the changes providing the voice for the

1 changing demographics and for California as it is today,
2 not as it was or as it's going to be, but as it is today.

3 And I think that this also provides a way for
4 leaderships to represent those people and those
5 communities and actually have leaders come from those
6 communities. And having that voice heard is really
7 important.

8 I think that adapting to changing demographics is
9 really important. Our state is very diverse, and many
10 things change all the time. And having the ability to
11 adapt to that is a huge impact this Commission can have.

12 Having said that, I think there is danger in
13 there will be a lot of information. There's a lot of
14 things have changed. And if the information isn't
15 analyzed in a way that is according to the legality or the
16 roles that have been set forth by the State, that can
17 actually be a problem.

18 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Describe a situation where
19 you've had to work as part of a group to achieve a common
20 goal. Tell us about the goal, describe your role within
21 the group, and tell us how the group worked or did not
22 work collaboratively to achieve this goal. If you're
23 selected to serve on the Citizens' Redistricting
24 Commission, tell us what you would do to foster
25 collaboration.

1 MS. SCHMITZ: When I was in Corporate America,
2 we -- well, let me rephrase that. When I was in Corporate
3 America, I was asked to create a website for a certain
4 market aspect of our company. And it was back when
5 websites, they were fresh and new, but it wasn't really a
6 way in which to create business. It was seen as we have
7 to do this, but it's not like we're going to make money
8 from it. So initially going into it, there was very
9 little buy-in and pretty big uphill battle.

10 The common goal was to create this website to
11 bring a lot of different departments together and to have
12 each of them have an interface and create a whole
13 experience for clients who would choose to go there versus
14 one-on-one with someone in our company or over the phone.

15 And I had to come up with the schematics for
16 myself and the actual web developer to work and
17 communicate with everybody across these departments. And
18 while it's fascinating to watch a marketing person and
19 accounting person discuss what's important to them, it
20 really was a time where I had to get buy-in from
21 everybody.

22 So ended up constructing a team. And what I did
23 is I went to the head of each department and asked them to
24 recommend three different people they thought liked to
25 think outside the box, that were achieving in their
26

1 department, and that the head of the department trusted.

2 And we created our group. And from the three people, I
3 went to each department and I talked to each of them.

4 And for me, what really came through was their
5 enthusiasm. And so if people were willing to try
6 something new and willing to be a part of this, that
7 really sort of spoke to me.

8 So we had each represented from all the varying
9 departments, and myself and the web developer did work on
10 the back end. And what we ended up doing was having
11 weekly meetings of this group where we'd come together and
12 we had a project time line. So they felt like every week
13 they had a say in every step and the look and feel and the
14 things we said for each department. I asked them to write
15 their content and bring it back to us. A marketing person
16 would then sort of make it lay person friendly. But I got
17 enough information from them where they feel vested and
18 where the entire company sort of came together.

19 It actually ended up being a really neat
20 initiative in that we started to gain momentum and are
21 delivering deadlines ahead of schedule. And I think the
22 friendships and the different things that were made
23 started collaboration in other areas. And we were able to
24 have people bring professional enthusiasm and a lot of
25 great work ethic and ideas to something that initially was

1 just going to be an afterthought.

2 As a result, our business started to be generated
3 from that website and other things were brought into
4 account. And you know, we did fun things as well, like we
5 would order muffins and coffee and make sure people felt
6 like thank you for spending your time here on top of your
7 regular work. We know this is an hour a week, plus more
8 outside of this meeting you have to be doing.

9 It certainly wasn't myself. The web developer
10 helped and everybody along the way constructed this to
11 make it their own. I think something that would have been
12 really an afterthought or something that was just thought
13 of went up -- was a really neat collaborative effort
14 between all these different areas that in the previous
15 years probably haven't worked together.

16 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: A considerable amount of
17 the Commission's work will involve meeting with people
18 from all over California who come from very different
19 backgrounds and very different perspectives. If you're
20 selected to serve on the Commission, tell us about the
21 specific skills you possess that will make you effective
22 in interacting with the public.

23 MS. SCHMITZ: Well, I like to talk. And
24 sometimes people really like that. I find people
25 fascinating.

1 I think I often oscillate between I really want
2 to be a physicist and I really want to be a psychologist.
3 Both of those things are fascinating to me. And part of
4 that fascination is a respect for learning about people
5 and where they come from and their story. I think as is
6 evident in our world, the more you get to know each other,
7 the more we're all the same. And having that interaction
8 with people I think is really important.

9 Because I bring that attitude -- I mean, I make
10 friends at the grocery store. People open up to me.

11 I also speak different languages. And sometimes
12 there is a certain demographic of people that if I just
13 speak their language, a flurry of communication has
14 occurred.

15 And actually I had a gentleman where I was
16 speaking one language and he started at the end and I said
17 I don't speak -- he said, "no. No. No. You follow."

18 So I think I'm really comfortable with public
19 speaking. I'm comfortable with meeting people I've never
20 met before and having a conversation. I'm comfortable
21 speaking on subjects that people are uncomfortable about.

22 I do a lot of work with hospice and my volunteer.
23 I deal with a lot of death and families in a time of their
24 lives that's really difficult. And I find that I'm
25 comfortable with them. They feel comfortable with me.

1 And that rapport that we've built helps me to interact
2 with a lot of different people in a lot of different
3 arenas.

4 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Thank you.

5 Mr. Ahmadi.

6 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you. Good morning, Ms.
7 Schmitz.

8 MS. SCHMITZ: Good morning.

9 CHAIR AHMADI: Let me ask a quick follow-up on
10 the last response. You said you're a talker, which is a
11 good skill. I believe in most cases by talking to people
12 you encourage them to talk to you back and get the
13 information.

14 A hypothetical follow-up question. What if
15 someone rejects to listen to you for whatever reason they
16 have? How would you handle that? And have you had any
17 situation where you were frustrated not being able to talk
18 to people as much as you want to and how did you handle
19 that?

20 MS. SCHMITZ: Well, I face that every day because
21 I have a three-year-old. And she comes up to me and will
22 say, "Stop. No more love. No more talking."

23 So I also -- there are times when I've had
24 pretty -- I'm declined to state, so I don't follow a
25 party. I actually research candidates and learn

1 information about them and then I vote based on their
2 decisions.

3 And I live in an area where a lot of my close
4 friends are far more conservative. And there are times
5 when we have been having discussion and they will say to
6 me, "I don't want to hear you." And I think in those
7 situations it's really important to respect that. A lot
8 of what I do is reflective listening. When I can see
9 somebody does not want to hear me, the easiest thing for
10 me to say is, "You really don't want to hear me," followed
11 by a lot of silence that creates enough space for them to
12 feel like well, you heard me. And generally when I sit in
13 silence after making a comment where I'm making sure that
14 they know that they've been heard, a lot of people tend to
15 open up.

16 I don't know frustration is the right word. I
17 think there are times when I'm saddened that people don't
18 want to talk to me or that they need the space. But in
19 the end, if I'm really in that moment, it's very easy to
20 see it has very little to do with me. So to be frustrated
21 or take it personally isn't really my role, because it has
22 everything to do with what's going on with them and I just
23 have to respect that.

24 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you very much.

25 Should you be selected on the Commission, what

1 role do you see yourself comfortable with on the
2 Commission?

3 MS. SCHMITZ: I think that throughout my career,
4 my education, being at home and being a business owner, I
5 really have tried on various hats. I'm very good at being
6 a leader. But I also say that I'm a great team player and
7 I'm able to be part of a group.

8 I'm comfortable being the person that has to
9 speak up and be in front of everybody. I'm also
10 comfortable being the person that's being silently
11 supportive and being in the back.

12 So I think that based on the Commission as a
13 whole and the others that are chosen, everybody should
14 really speak to their comfortable and specific skills.
15 And if there is a need for someone to be more of a leader
16 or more up front, I'm willing to do that. If there is a
17 need for more people to be supportive and quiet and in the
18 back, I think that that I'm very comfortable with that.

19 I'm also very comfortable with reading
20 information data and analyzing it and coming up with
21 different scenarios for how that should be used and
22 comfortable with numbers.

23 I really have been fortunate at a very young age
24 I was thrown into a job where I needed to learn a lot of
25 things. And I became very comfortable with not knowing

1 anything and having to learn and knowing a lot of it and
2 having to teach. And then coming back for full circle and
3 not knowing and having to learn.

4 CHAIR AHMADI: Great.

5 In what ways -- you mentioned you speak other
6 languages. In what ways that's going to help you with
7 your work as a Commissioner should you be selected?

8 MS. SCHMITZ: The interesting part about
9 linguistics is when you speak another language, you tend
10 to think literally. If you're translating -- for
11 instance, I'm very flute in Spanish. When someone speaks
12 in Spanish, if I translate it literal Spanish to the
13 English, sometimes it has a different meaning or different
14 things are being expressed.

15 And I've found over the years that having the
16 ability to speak other languages and sort of
17 linguistically dissect them helps with my ability to
18 critically think to understand what the person's trying to
19 convey and to sometimes see it in a different angle or way
20 than I would have normally.

21 I will tell you that although I say that I'm
22 fluent, there are certain people from different areas what
23 is that word you just said. Have an interesting
24 background. So my Spanish is a mix. And that is a topic
25 of conversation and a lot of people hear. I understand

1 French and Italian, although if it's an Italian channel
2 and they're going -- it's very difficult for me to follow.
3 I think in all of those things, whatever language people
4 are speaking, when you can think about it literally and
5 then translate it or even vocabulary, it helps to sort of
6 understand a little bit more.

7 CHAIR AHMADI: And I agree with you, because I
8 speak more than four languages myself. And there's
9 certain aspects or values in being able to speak with
10 people with their own language.

11 How would you compensate in situations where
12 you're not able to speak the people's language, Asian
13 or -- I'm just using an example. How would you compensate
14 for that, because you said that's very important to be
15 able to speak.

16 MS. SCHMITZ: I think the beauty of not speaking
17 a language is the ability to really be with a person and
18 feel them, their gestures, their facial expressions. And
19 you know communication is a certain percentage what we
20 say. But our body language actually conveys quite a bit.

21 I think in those situations, it's almost easier
22 to really hear a person when you don't speak their
23 language, because you can see how they're feeling it and
24 what's coming across.

25 I think that one of the most important things is

1 to keep in mind that I need to hear however the ability to
2 hear them is going to happen what they're actually saying.
3 Because if you're having somebody translated, getting that
4 clear is really important. So there could be a danger of
5 making sure that you're understanding what they're saying
6 and not necessarily just jumping to a conclusion.

7 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you very much.

8 And in response to standard question number
9 three, you mentioned that one of the major impacts, if I
10 heard you correctly, you said that is to provide a voice
11 for changing demographics. Could you elaborate on that
12 what you mean by changing demographics?

13 MS. SCHMITZ: By changing demographics, I meant
14 that our state, the people that were born, the people that
15 live here, the people that have moved have all changed so
16 much in the last decade that we're constantly changing
17 and. Where they're living, how they're living, and what's
18 important to them is different. That's what I meant.

19 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you. Also in
20 response to question number four, you use your example of
21 setting up this website for the Corporate America. Which
22 company was that?

23 MS. SCHMITZ: I worked for Transamerican
24 Retirement Services in Los Angeles.

25 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. In 2005 I believe?

1 MS. SCHMITZ: Uh-huh.

2 CHAIR AHMADI: What was the -- well, what was the
3 reason initially that they were rejecting the idea of
4 coming up with a website?

5 MS. SCHMITZ: You know, I don't think that it was
6 necessarily a reject. It was the insurance industry and
7 particularly the retirement industry is built heavily on
8 relationships. We had a very, very strong sales team. A
9 very, very strong marketing materials to back those sales
10 team, a country wide service team. And the company really
11 took pride in the relationships that were built with the
12 clients.

13 And I think that creating an interface where we
14 sort of marketed ourselves didn't seem what we were used
15 to. So I think -- I don't know that there was a rejection
16 of it. But I think that it wasn't -- it was sort of an
17 afterthought. Like look how strong we are with our
18 people. And our people are so good that, okay, we'll do
19 this. But it wasn't like, you know, we all have to do --
20 it was a very different mentality.

21 CHAIR AHMADI: How long did that project take or
22 the time frame?

23 MS. SCHMITZ: From the inception to end, probably
24 18 months. And that I mean by starting and launching and
25 being completely done. The actual meetings where

1 everybody came and sat and did all that was much shorter.

2 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you so much.

3 In your application, you state that you studied
4 redistricting in college and you understand it. And of
5 course, redistricting at this current scale as part of the
6 Commission's work is new for California and for the
7 nation. But never the less, based on your studies and
8 based on your understanding of what you redistricting is
9 about, what do you think would be the most challenging
10 aspect or the most important aspect of redistricting for
11 California?

12 MS. SCHMITZ: I think first I'd like to clarify.
13 I did study that in college and now that seems like a
14 thousand years ago. So the benefit of knowing it and the
15 benefit of not knowing it are one and the same now.

16 The person I studied under Dr. Bruce Cane who at
17 the time -- the level of the enthusiasm -- I remember the
18 first day he started talking about this in class and I
19 remember thinking, what is he talking about? He was so
20 excited. And it started with -- the analogy he had given
21 us about a square on the map. And he was talking about
22 how this square can vote for one person to represent them
23 and kind of talked through that. And we were like, yeah.
24 Okay. And then he sort of changed the lines and said what
25 would happen if we did it in a triangle and these people

1 were totally excluded and now this was being represented
2 and the person went up that's who spoke for them.

3 And I remember thinking the power of a district
4 just thinking, wow. If that small line was moved and
5 things were changed, you have a whole different outlook,
6 like who's actually being represented, what's important to
7 them, and what's being included.

8 So I think what's important as far as the
9 districting and understanding and not understanding it is
10 yes, I studied it under Dr. Cane and was under a different
11 set of rules. I think the importance and the value of it
12 came through.

13 But I think in this situation it's sort of a
14 brand-new thing. And putting things that were applied to
15 that into this seems a little bit like it doesn't fit.

16 But I do think the importance of taking the one
17 voice, one vote, and the democratic values that go with it
18 are very important to carry through. I think this is an
19 incredible opportunity for us as citizens to sort of
20 represent ourselves in looking at these lines and what's
21 important and saying really that this area, however that
22 gets drawn for numbers, is also cognizant of what those
23 numbers mean and who's representing, because when those
24 people get there, their voice needs to reflect the needs,
25 the ideals, the desires of that community.

1 CHAIR AHMADI: How do you define the community?

2 MS. SCHMITZ: Gosh, that's a very long question.
3 Simply, I think community is meant --

4 CHAIR AHMADI: In a few words.

5 MS. SCHMITZ: Community is many things. I think
6 people come together based on their ethnicity, their race,
7 their religions, their socioeconomics, their beliefs in
8 education, their beliefs in whether you're a unionized
9 employee. So many things.

10 And characteristics build a community. And I
11 think that's one of the things that is intriguing to me
12 about this is how do you take -- let's say a
13 neighborhood -- because it's based on households and
14 really represent what that means. And you know, on my
15 street, we are a young couple with young children. And
16 houses down the street -- we have a World War II veteran
17 who was actually on the beach in Normandy on D Day. That
18 is amazing. That we are neighbors, that that we share our
19 street.

20 Now, do we have the same political beliefs,
21 religious beliefs, educational beliefs? I mean, that then
22 becomes a bigger question of really representing that. Do
23 we want a safe neighborhood where our kids can run down
24 the street and feel like they're taken care of? Yes.

25 So I feel like there are a lot of differences.

1 There are also commonalities that we can find. And I
2 think that a lot of the data, a lot of the voices, people
3 that this Commission will meet and hear, that's where the
4 information becomes important. Because in the end, all
5 mothers want their children to be fed and cared for and
6 taken care of. And you can find those commonalities and
7 hopefully still respect the difference.

8 CHAIR AHMADI: So any ideas about how the
9 Commission should go about finding a balance or where do
10 you draw the line?

11 MS. SCHMITZ: Well, ideally, there will be some
12 parameters that are set forth legally by the state that
13 says these are the things that can need to be followed.
14 And that's not negotiable.

15 And then I think the Commission really has to
16 agree to the terms of what's going to be important. What
17 are those things that we are looking for, and how do you
18 take that information and create it and make it real so
19 that you can design them.

20 I think outside of that, I don't know that I have
21 a further answer to go in depth to that, because it would
22 really -- I'd have to think about it longer. It's a very
23 tricky line.

24 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you so much. Let me just
25 look to my next question.

1 In your application, you identified yourself with
2 both Latinos and non-Latinos. And also you state that you
3 work with groups of Latinos voters to explore voting
4 issues.

5 Could you please share with us, you know, the
6 details of that connectivity? And also if you can please
7 share with us your -- the lesson that you learned from the
8 activities in terms of what are the shared characteristics
9 of the population and if you can just give us some detail
10 on that?

11 MS. SCHMITZ: To both Latinos and non-Latinos?

12 CHAIR AHMADI: Yeah.

13 MS. SCHMITZ: The project that I work on was for
14 Dr. Cane's class. And we did a sort of a year-end paper.
15 And we were studying -- I went to Berkeley. And so the
16 area surrounding Berkeley, there is a small Latinos
17 population that you can take a BART ride over. I forget
18 the exact exit.

19 But what we wanted to monitor was to -- Latino
20 voters tend to go more conservative and more liberal. And
21 we ended up choosing a strip mall where we were going to
22 go and ask questions. And initially, the interesting part
23 of the community there -- I'm only speaking to the strip
24 mall. I had experience with. The minute I had a
25 clipboard everybody got nervous. And one of my fellow

1 classmates is a white man from Irvine who walked up in his
2 shorts, and they -- the entire strip mall would not talk
3 to him. No one wanted to talk to us. No one wanted to go
4 up to him.

5 And I then went into a laundromat where there was
6 a mom with her two kids. She was folding laundry. And I
7 said, "I have some questions. We're a couple students
8 from Berkeley, and we are doing research for one of our
9 papers." And she looked at my friend and looked at me and
10 wasn't really sure. I had asked her, I said, "I'm
11 noticing that I'm making you nervous and he's making you
12 nervous. Can you tell me a little bit about that." We
13 started a dialogue. She was really concerned who we
14 really were, why we were gathering information. There was
15 a lot of lack of trust that sort of came with it.

16 And in a grander scale from the Latino community
17 that I am exposed to, there is a distrust for anyone
18 gathering information. And I don't know if that stems
19 from whether it's citizenship issues or legality issues of
20 how they're here in the country or has to do with a
21 greater distrust of government they have in there native
22 land. The impetus for their feelings I didn't know.

23 But I did know that this sample grouping
24 initially was not willing to talk to us, very hesitant
25 about giving us information, particularly when we started

1 asking them about how they would vote or -- so then it was
2 like, well, now we are just not going to talk to you at
3 all. And that was an interesting conversation and sort of
4 experience that I had in that.

5 Since then, I've also been exposed to other
6 Latinos in the Los Angeles area who are professionals who
7 live in the area who are very comfortable. And any time I
8 have brought up a conversation about do you tend to vote
9 more conservative. Is that related to your culture? I
10 ask questions that are sort of the opposite. They supply
11 a lot of information. They'll tell you why they think
12 this. Where it came from. What they thought. What their
13 grandma thinks about it. It is an interesting dialogue.

14 And those are two groups which you could look at
15 and say they're both Latino, but in the end, behave
16 completely different. And whether that is because they
17 were professional educated, second-generation Latinos who
18 had grown up here versus a mom who had come here for work
19 and had her two kids with her at the laundromat, I don't
20 know. There's a myriad of reasons why they behave the way
21 they did.

22 And those situations have also allowed me to see
23 whether you belong to a category of -- whatever category
24 that is, but it's not as simplistic as that. It's deeper
25 and there's more information there.

1 I also grew up in a very middle class area where
2 I didn't realize that I was Latino until I got to college.
3 And you thought, oh, this is a term. I mean, I just
4 thought I was darker and my hair was more brown than the
5 other kids. And it was an interesting thing that felt to
6 me like, wow.

7 And so I always grew up with friends. My mom and
8 my friends -- parents were part of the Lion's Club. And
9 we did all the other things that a lot of the Latino
10 people I met in college did not. They had a different
11 experience. Again, I don't know if that's under the same
12 label or why that happens. But those are my experiences.

13 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you.

14 Given that I have a only a few seconds and you're
15 a talker, I have to wait for my turn. If I have time at
16 the end, I'll have more questions.

17 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Ms. Camacho.

18 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Hello, Ms. Schmitz.

19 MS. SCHMITZ: Good morning.

20 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Kind of going along the same
21 line, you were talking about your research project and
22 that the Latinos that you encountered for that small group
23 had an apprehension of individuals gathering information.

24 As a Commissioner, you'll be going out to the
25 public. And it's important that these individuals that

1 don't normally provide information does. How do you think
2 would be the best way to encourage these individuals to
3 voice their opinions?

4 MS. SCHMITZ: I think that one of the things that
5 you can do before you come upon a situation is really open
6 yourself up and be in a space where you are there to hear,
7 to welcome conversation.

8 Before I go on a lot of my hostile calls, I will
9 tack a moment in my car to get to a place where it ceases
10 to be about me. And I go into the environment where I'm
11 open. And I find that the times that I'm rushed and I
12 don't take the time to do that, then something happens in
13 my visit. And I'm thinking, I should have totally
14 stopped. And there are sometimes when I will stop and say
15 start over. Let's do this.

16 And I think prepping yourself to go into an area
17 where I need to be open, I want to hear, and I'm here to
18 learn. You're attitude brings so much to the table.

19 Second, I think that once you're there
20 approaching the situation, really connecting with an
21 individual that's hesitant to voice their opinions, I
22 think you can be honest and open and say this is what I'm
23 here to do. And it is a service for you. And I'm working
24 for you right now for you to share this with me. And then
25 really sort of try and foster a dialogue.

1 And sometimes that means providing a space of
2 silence or asking very non-threatening opening questions
3 where someone doesn't feel like they have to voice
4 necessarily an opinion. But they can say, oh, yeah, I
5 could or not. They sort of feel safe. And really just
6 giving them the space to gathering themselves and answer.

7 I think I have to be respectful that some people
8 before you're done asking a question, I have an answer and
9 three of them. And other people need to sit back and say
10 this is what she just said. I need to think about it and
11 I'll give you an answer. And being comfortable with that
12 silence to provide them the freedom and the safety to
13 voice that opinion.

14 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: The scenario that you
15 provided was individuals that would come to the meetings
16 that would be there. How about these individuals where
17 you had to go out to these individuals to discuss this? I
18 don't see them without some sort of encouragement to come.
19 How would you have these people have an interest to come?
20 And how would you get that voice out to them?

21 MS. SCHMITZ: I don't know what the parameters
22 are for marketing for the Commission. I don't know if
23 there are rules on how you can contact a community or not.

24 But I would say that within those rules creating
25 a platform -- for instance, if most people listen to a

1 radio station and that's where they get their information,
2 if they trust a certain D Day or they tend to follow those
3 ads, having something where it says we, the Commission,
4 will be available for a conversation and dialogue. We're
5 encouraging you to come out and voice your opinion. This
6 is for X, Y and Z purpose, and we'd like you there. I
7 think getting the word out in a medium where people feel
8 comfortable.

9 I'm not necessarily responsive to people standing
10 outside the grocery store asking for my donation or
11 opinion. But if someone provides literature for me that I
12 can emotionally go over and think and then have a
13 conversation about, I'm much more responsive that way.

14 I think identifying different mediums that people
15 tend to respond to is very critical. And then providing
16 those mediums for them to engage.

17 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Is there any particular
18 mediums where you think would be helpful?

19 MS. SCHMITZ: I think that going -- you know,
20 people who have children are very responsive to education.
21 So any time that you have a group of parents, I think a
22 school -- just even the building itself provides some
23 comfort. And I think that much like back to school night
24 or an open house where it's like, you know, from this time
25 to this time, this is what's going on in this arena.

1 So I think for parents, doing something around an
2 education area and setting it up like they're used to at
3 their school with their teachers or administration is a
4 good place.

5 You have to speak to people in what speaks to
6 them. If you're going to a community where 90 percent of
7 them are small business owners, then you have to see
8 what's important for a small business owner and what
9 medium they respond to.

10 If you're was a small business owner and the
11 biggest way that you conduct business is through e-mail
12 and your website, then you send out a communication that
13 way. If you're a small business owner, for instance,
14 farmers market and you're interacting with people, then
15 you need to go to those places as a Commissioner and say,
16 "Hey, I'm here. And I'm going to be in this place at this
17 time and this is the information that I'm trying to gather
18 from you."

19 I don't think that you can limit yourself to
20 these are the only ideas we have. I think that you'll
21 look at the community. You see what's been successful
22 there before as far as communication and try to engage
23 that community in that way.

24 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you.

25 You talked a little bit about your class that you

1 took for redistricting at Berkeley. Was there other
2 things taught like the Voting Rights Act and stacking and
3 packing? Did you get an understanding of those concepts?

4 MS. SCHMITZ: The actual class was California
5 Politics. So the redistricting was a big topic. It was
6 the late 90s, ten years ago. And the majority of our
7 semester focused on voting trends and districts and that
8 kind of stuff. So I don't want to do a disservice to Dr.
9 Cane, because he probably taught some of it. But again,
10 to my recollection, I have none on those other topics.

11 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. You were an owner of
12 a small business. Could you describe the similarities and
13 differences in creating that small business and starting
14 up the first Redistricting Commission?

15 MS. SCHMITZ: Well, I think in both senses you
16 have this idea and it's something new and you're going to
17 try it.

18 And I think for my business as well, there's a
19 lot of information gathering. So to start the business I
20 needed to know federally, what I had to do, state, what I
21 had to do county, and for my city. There is a lot of
22 regulations you have to follow as far as what you file,
23 the different things you adhere to, paying sales taxes,
24 all those things, and understanding the rules of the game.

25 So I think much like that in the Commission, you

1 have to understand what our parameters are. What is the
2 job at hand. What are we supposed to do. Not what we
3 think we're supposed to do, but what we are actually
4 supposed to do. And then coming up with a game plan on
5 how you operate within those parameters.

6 Once you understand those parameters, I think you
7 go to the next level. You identify your objectives.

8 For me, my objectives weren't very clear.
9 Initially, I was a small business. Yes, I wanted to make
10 profit. But I also wanted a way for people to go back to
11 very ornate invitations. And for me, it was an
12 interesting conversation to have with my business partner
13 about what our goals were. Was it to make money solely,
14 or to have a small piece of art that you got to keep
15 because someone invited you to their wedding or their
16 birthday or something special like that?

17 And I think as the Commission you also have to
18 have those objectives. And what is it? Is it for all
19 voices to be heard? Is it for a recommendation at the end
20 of the whole thing that says here's how you do it? It
21 sort of has to be a clear definition of what you're hoping
22 to come out.

23 And then from there, you sort to build your team.
24 What is it that you need to do, those things? Do you need
25 sales? Do you need marketing? Do you need this? Clearly,

1 for this, we need a lot of marketing one way or another.
2 You have to communicate with the citizens of the state.
3 How are you going to do that? What's the most
4 constructive way to do that? And what does that take?
5 You know, does it take 30 people? Well, we don't have 30
6 people. So what is it going to take within the parameters
7 that we've previously defined to make it successful?

8 So I think that going through the succession of
9 identifying your objectives and your goals, working within
10 the parameters of the legality of the entity, and then
11 going to how is that team going to do all this
12 realistically or take this information, gather it. How
13 are you going to get the information, all that?

14 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you. Would you
15 describe for us your projects concerning voting trends?
16 And then did you learn anything that would be helpful to
17 the Commission?

18 MS. SCHMITZ: It was interesting for that small
19 subset of individuals that we ended up working with, the
20 preference for their voting was more towards a
21 conservative vote. A lot of their information that was
22 provided was based on religious background. The majority
23 of the people we interviewed were Catholic and some here
24 and there Christian of different denominations. And a lot
25 of the way they voted are issues they saw were important

1 or would vote -- because some of them were not legal and
2 couldn't vote definitely aligned with their religious
3 conservatism.

4 It was interesting to say if, you know, taxes
5 went along a liberal line, let's say you had to pay extra
6 taxes, but you also had to subscribe to someone who
7 believed in abortion. That was a quandary. Was very
8 interesting thing to see, because a lot of them, they
9 identified so strongly with the Catholicism, they were
10 like wow, this is not negotiable. It was an interesting
11 thing to see that small sub-set.

12 So in the end, what we ended up finding out from
13 this group was that they tended to go towards the
14 Republican party. And that's what really spoke to them.
15 But when you actually started dissecting issue by issue
16 and then had a dialogue with them about what do you
17 believe about this, they tended to start moving to the
18 middle. And then we would say, "Well, what if there was
19 another party right here." They would then say, "Yeah,
20 I'd go to that party."

21 It was interesting to see how at first blush --
22 and we didn't say, you know, here's what this party stands
23 for. We just said of these things, what's important to
24 you? And it became very evident, well, I believe and God
25 is this. As soon as their dialogue opened up, you could

1 tell it was based on the church and the doctrine and
2 things they believed religiously. So it was an
3 interesting thing to do.

4 And then what really blew it out of the water, if
5 we ever threw in immigration laws or anything that had to
6 do with a Democratic party. And I mean, the mom with the
7 two kids and the laundromat was like, "oh, yeah. Then I'd
8 vote for that guy." But you're going to throw everything
9 else out that you just convinced me that you
10 wholeheartedly followed. It was interesting. And I think
11 for her what was really real was her two kids and their
12 future and what they can do.

13 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: With all that knowledge that
14 you gained for that project, how would that experience and
15 the knowledge that you just stated, how would that help
16 you as a Commissioner?

17 MS. SCHMITZ: I think that that is a perfect
18 example of things aren't black and white. I think that
19 one of the things that I mentioned that could also harm
20 the Commission, could harm the state, is the ability to
21 translate analytical information in the wrong way.

22 For instance, when you're looking at data and
23 information that you're collecting, it's important to read
24 it without any judgment and really try to be objective.
25 And I think that's the case where you could blanketly said

1 all Latinos only care about things that align with the
2 Catholic church and that's it. And that's how to vote.
3 You would have been sorely mistaken.

4 When you started to really talk to people and
5 really get to the core of what was important to them, this
6 woman would have thrown everything else out that she
7 believed if there was some legislation where her children
8 could become legal and then have a thriving life in this
9 country.

10 And I think taking information at first blush and
11 really saying, well, this is what this says, and we are
12 all going to go with this is a very dangerous thing. And
13 I think that has taught me to really see individuals for
14 themselves and to also know that we may in the same
15 conversation contradict ourselves. And really allowing
16 someone to express that and to really hear it and be okay
17 with it is something that I've learned from that, from
18 other things.

19 I mean, I think that people are as honest and
20 sincere as they can be. And in that moment, they're
21 telling you the truth. And then if their circumstances
22 change, they would still be as honest and sincere based on
23 those circumstances.

24 So I think it's important to really take that
25 information and really try and analyze the data in a way

1 where we are operating within the parameters and the
2 legalities of the Commission. Because there is a danger
3 of sort of going on a different route if you're hasty in
4 saying, well, because of this, this. I don't know that's
5 necessarily true. I think you have to take your time with
6 that.

7 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you. That was my last
8 question.

9 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Ms. Spano.

10 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Good morning.

11 MS. SCHMITZ: Good morning.

12 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: I want to bug you a little
13 bit more about redistricting class, but I won't talk about
14 it that much.

15 MS. SCHMITZ: I got a B.

16 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: That's good.

17 MS. SCHMITZ: It was. That was a big
18 accomplishment.

19 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Was this more of a complex
20 area for you in political science?

21 MS. SCHMITZ: Yes.

22 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: In what way?

23 MS. SCHMITZ: You know, when I went into
24 political science which was my freshman year, I decided I
25 want to do political science. I had aspirations for

1 public office and all that goes with that.

2 By the end of my sophomore year, I recognized,
3 no, I kind of like econ better.

4 And at that time, I realized that two things
5 happened. One, I realized that I was going to college to
6 get an education, not to get a job. And that shifted my
7 thinking dramatically. And then had that happened, I
8 probably would have gone back and been a philosophy major.
9 At this point it was like well, okay. So I've chosen to
10 go down this road.

11 And this was an upper level political science
12 class with a niche to it. And it was part of my
13 requirements to take classes. And that semester when I
14 looked at my course load, I wanted a couple of other
15 classes that the California politics class was one in
16 them. But a lot of my focus by that time had become
17 economics and business. And so while there was
18 fascinating things, I loved this class and I learned so
19 much -- and political science still fascinates me greatly.
20 I did find myself having more of a love for the economic
21 side and all that went with that and business. And then I
22 got internships in businesses and my life carried me that
23 way.

24 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: So you ended up having to
25 get a job.

1 MS. SCHMITZ: Exactly. But I got a good
2 education along the line.

3 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: You mentioned that you went
4 out and did a study on the Latinos voting issues. I was
5 wondering if you ever look at precinct analysis in that
6 area. You said it was close by in the BART station. Did
7 your instructor, Dr. Cane, ever have you do analysis on
8 that?

9 MS. SCHMITZ: No. He was really interested in
10 that particular area. I think it was El Cerrito, in
11 particular. He I think had -- again Dr. Cane is a great
12 person. If I make a mistake, it's me, not him.

13 I think at the time he was interested in other
14 trends that were going on and was hoping that our research
15 could sort have dovetail into what he was doing.

16 In the end, I don't know if it ended up happening
17 that way. One of my friends ended up working a lot closer
18 with Dr. Cane, so she sort of parlayed that into his
19 stuff.

20 But I don't know it was anything further than our
21 research project was to go out. And in the end, we wanted
22 to prove that the Latino population of that area was more
23 inclined to vote with the Republican party and it was as
24 simple as that.

25 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: No specific local issues or

1 anything like that?

2 MS. SCHMITZ: Right. We didn't go further as far
3 as --

4 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: He never went over Census
5 data?

6 MS. SCHMITZ: No.

7 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Can you tell me the most
8 important thing you learned about redistricting from his
9 class?

10 MS. SCHMITZ: I think that, you know, that
11 example I gave initially when he first started talking and
12 it really just resonated with me about your one voice and
13 one vote and that's heard and I thought, wow. So there's
14 people who draw these lines to then represent me. And
15 that really sort of blew me away. Because I thought,
16 well, how do they do that? Is it just numbers? And
17 that's not fair, because whether -- yeah, you could carve
18 out 100,000 people here and 100,000 people there, but that
19 doesn't mean that all 100,000 people are being
20 represented. And what if the majority of people there
21 didn't even agree. Every thing was sort of spliced.

22 I think, for me, it was really important in what
23 kept speaking to me was the power of the direct and what
24 happens to how those voices are being heard and
25 represented and the ability to represent them.

1 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How difficult do you believe
2 it will be to apply the theory you learned in Dr. Cane's
3 class to the actual drawing of the lines?

4 MS. SCHMITZ: Ridiculously difficult.

5 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: In what way?

6 MS. SCHMITZ: I think that, you know, clearly
7 there are districts now -- I don't know if the Commission
8 will take those districts into account or not. I don't
9 know if it's going to be solely based on Census data. I
10 don't know if it then says Census data, plus we got to do
11 some footwork because not everybody did the Census. I
12 think that taking -- it's a whole new ball game.

13 And I think understanding the importance of a
14 district still holds true. And I think I hold that. But
15 the logistics of the lines and all that, I think that's a
16 whole brand-new entity to explore and --

17 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Brand-new in what way? For
18 you or for the --

19 MS. SCHMITZ: I think for me. I think that
20 clearly it's been done here forever. So there are things
21 in place that I'm not even aware about, because I'm not
22 familiar or very close to it. And I think that while I
23 bring my knowledge and my view as to people being
24 represented, there are things in existence that I'm not
25 even aware about that if you gave me the information I

1 might think, oh, well, that makes perfect sense. So I
2 think brand-new to me versus --

3 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How would you make sense of
4 this drawing?

5 MS. SCHMITZ: I think I'd have to really have to
6 look at the lines, who encompasses those lines.

7 For instance, the district that I live in, we are
8 lumped in with Orange County. And there are a lot of
9 times when I say that's really fascinating that we are
10 lumped in with that. And to be honest with you, had I not
11 been raising children I probably would have stopped to
12 look like how was this drawn, and why is our area included
13 with Orange County?

14 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Why was it fascinating to
15 you? Do you feel like where you're located doesn't belong
16 in Orange County?

17 MS. SCHMITZ: Yeah. It's fascinating, because I
18 think that the particular areas that were lumped in with
19 Orange County, while they match socioeconomically,
20 politically our area is far more liberal than the voting
21 districts in Orange County that would sort of -- well,
22 it's the same district. I'm misspeaking. I seems like
23 that population has more of a conservative spin and our
24 area has more of a liberal.

25 But the proximity -- so the district right next

1 to us which logically -- that's based on my clearly
2 subjective opinion, because I just live there. But we're
3 more aligned with those to the north of us. I think, wow,
4 they didn't -- so they stopped there and they're all there
5 and we're down here. And it's fascinating to me.

6 I would love to see here's your district and this
7 is why it was drawn, because I think that would be really
8 interesting information. And I mean, perhaps even they
9 would say, well, see. Your voting trends match them. And
10 would just shock me because my experience would be
11 different.

12 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: You tell us in your
13 application you're a first generation immigrant and
14 you grew up in an all-white neighborhood.

15 MS. SCHMITZ: Yeah.

16 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Can you tell me how you
17 believe that this will benefit you or help you in your
18 Commission work?

19 MS. SCHMITZ: Well, like I mentioned, I didn't
20 really know that I wasn't white until I got to college.
21 It was an interesting -- it was just a very interesting
22 thing.

23 And I think I was exposed to a lot of different
24 ideas. And you know, I lived in a home where my mother
25 was a professional and pretty high. And she worked in an

1 Ambassador's office. And when she immigrated and came --
2 and really became a blue collar worker, because that's the
3 job she could get. And you know, it didn't actually dawn
4 on me until I was a mom. Like dang, she gave up so much
5 for us, because she had this cool career. And I mean,
6 back in the 70s she had her own office in an embassy. Oh,
7 my God. You totally gave that up to become -- initially,
8 she actually started cleaning houses because she couldn't
9 get any other jobs. And so just fascinates me.

10 And around us, all the moms stayed home. And my
11 mom worked. And so it was interesting, because that's
12 just the way that it was. And so I was exposed to -- you
13 know, we would get home from school and usually go to our
14 friends house. And her mom was home. Her mom cooked hot
15 breakfast, hot lunch, and when we got home, there was
16 these awesome burritos she used to make. And I was like,
17 oh, my God. Your mom cooks all the time. And that was so
18 fascinating to me.

19 It never occurred to me the socioeconomics that
20 the fact that their dad was in the house and was able to
21 work and afforded the mom to stay home so she could do
22 this, never entered into my head for my mom was the sole
23 bread winner, and therefore she had to leave the house to
24 make money to support us.

25 And as I got older, I started to recognize these

1 differences. And I realized that we were so different and
2 yet so alike. You know, my mom who worked all day long
3 wanted the best for us. She wanted us to eat well. She
4 wanted us to get a good education and feel safe enough to
5 play in our yards. And the friend across the street whose
6 house we went to, her mom wanted the same thing. You
7 couldn't cross that line because then you'll be in the big
8 street versus our cul-de-sac. And the mom was the same
9 thing. Wanted our safety. Wanted us to be able to play
10 outside, to give us healthy snacks.

11 And culturally, my mother and their mother was
12 light years ago. I mean, my mom was a Catholic-raised
13 Latino woman, and this was a very wispy white woman.

14 And those things just -- it wasn't until later as
15 I got to college I started to -- appreciated my ability to
16 relate to all these environments and to adapt and to see
17 the benefits. And, you know, there were times when I was
18 like, gosh, it sucks you have to work, mom. And then
19 there were times when I was like, I'm so glad my mom isn't
20 all over my business all the time. Because her mom was
21 home all the time.

22 And so there were -- I could see benefits and the
23 negatives of all the different scenarios and appreciate
24 all the cultural nuances and the different things brought
25 to the table by all these different cultural experiences

1 that I was exposed to.

2 I mean, my mom became part of the Lion's Club.

3 And I remember people in the Latino community were like,

4 what the hell is that? And my mom was trying to explain

5 to them and they're like, "I wouldn't do that."

6 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Why did they feel that way,

7 you think?

8 MS. SCHMITZ: I think that the community --

9 particularly the community that my mom was exposed to, the

10 Latino community, worked so hard to put food on the table

11 that honestly anything above that was just too much. They

12 were just trying to survive.

13 And the people that volunteered their time and

14 did stuff with the Lion's club and all that had -- the

15 moms usually were home and they had the time and they had

16 the energy. And my mom was just -- she always told us if

17 you don't have money, you have time. But either way

18 you're giving back.

19 And so we were exposed -- I mean, being really

20 young at the L.A. Mission serving food to homeless people.

21 And a woman had a mental condition and I was like, "Mom,

22 you are trying to kill us. I don't know why you make us

23 come here." And she said, "Because you were fortunate

24 enough to be born to me. You could have been born on the

25 street. You're fortunate and you're able to give back."

1 And some of the other people in the communities always
2 said, that's so great. And they gave in their own way.
3 They helped their families back home. They helped other
4 people who had come to the country. But for them, it was
5 really I felt survival for their family and their income.
6 And my mom was like -- my mom just believed we would
7 always be okay. So her -- for her was more important that
8 we learn to give back than it was to say we are worried
9 about X, Y, or Z. You didn't feel that.

10 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How important was this
11 experience? I know you have various volunteer activities
12 where you give back. How important is this to you when
13 you apply the redistricting and really try to understand
14 the different areas in the community, shared interests?
15 It appears to me that given two Latinos where you lived,
16 they had a different perception of what your mother did
17 and what they believed should be done; getting this extra
18 education, achieving the status as she did in her
19 professional life, some seem resentful. There is a sense
20 of doing so much, and it's maybe not acceptable.

21 How does this experience in your volunteer work
22 help you in terms of relating to others in the community,
23 relating to individuals in Compton or Butte County or
24 places that you haven't gone to?

25 MS. SCHMITZ: I think that, you know, I never

1 felt like there was any resentment or judgment. And
2 perhaps that was the picture my mother painted. Maybe to
3 her people were that way. But to us, she was like
4 whatever, everybody thinks it's fine. And I think that
5 what's important in that is I could describe my mom to you
6 as a Latino whom who came to this country as an immigrant
7 and became --

8 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Five minutes.

9 MS. SCHMITZ: -- a housekeeper and struggled to
10 raise her children. I could also present her as a
11 professional woman who worked in an embassy and was
12 exposed internationally to different cultures and
13 countries and traveled the world and brought to us a sense
14 of education and purpose.

15 So I think that in all of those cases, whether
16 someone is from Compton or Palos Verdes or Sacramento are
17 I think seeing that person for who they are. I don't know
18 if their geography necessarily dictates what's important
19 to them. I think if you're a farmer and have to live in
20 the central valley, because that's where your work is
21 perhaps that's a little bit different. But looking at the
22 person within their context and understanding that really
23 is important.

24 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: You said you had this
25 awareness when you went to Berkeley. Can you tell me

1 about what you discovered about the political preference
2 of that community where you lived?

3 MS. SCHMITZ: One of the -- so my mother is from
4 Guatemala and her parents are Western European. But in
5 California, a lot of people assume I'm Mexican. And one
6 of my first experiences with La Roza, an ethnic club on
7 campus. They were very upset because I didn't want to
8 join their club. And I said, "I'm not Mexican." And one
9 of the girls said, "Well, fine. You can try to act like
10 you're white, but" -- and I was like I'm not denying it.
11 It just was -- it wasn't -- that's when I first started to
12 get a taste of there's people all over the spectrum.

13 I have a friend who's Mexican American who grew
14 up in San Jose. Her parents were from Hillsborough. And
15 her take on what a Mexican family is equivalent to a very
16 high socioeconomic, educated. They had ranch and land and
17 all that.

18 I also met people who were Mexican American, grew
19 up in San Jose and their idea was my parents were farm
20 workers and they barely struggled to get me to go to
21 school. And so I think that in all of those cases you're
22 sort of exposed to -- I don't know that it's just a
23 straight answer. I think there is a lot that needs to be
24 taken into consideration. And I think that's important to
25 do and to keep -- be mindful of and to bring that to the

1 Commission, particularly when you're looking at creating a
2 district and representing people.

3 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

4 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Are you done?

5 Are there follow-up questions panelists?

6 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: No.

7 CHAIR AHMADI: Maybe after you.

8 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Okay. You've worked in
9 private business --

10 MS. SCHMITZ: Uh-huh.

11 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: -- including Corporate
12 America. I wonder how you think working as part of the
13 government will be different than your previous work
14 experience.

15 MS. SCHMITZ: You know, it's interesting, I did
16 four or five years at a 501 (c)(3), which is the
17 California Alumni Association. I was on the Executive
18 Board. I started out as a regular Board member and worked
19 my way up to Executive Board. That it was a great lesson.
20 I think that the private and public sector are run
21 differently. And I wanted to bring my corporate life in
22 and it's efficient and effective. And the best part that
23 could have happened was a joint humble pie that came with
24 it. I thought that businesses had it figured out. And
25 through that experience, I can't say that that was the

1 case.

2 I came to this 501(c)(3), and it was run in a
3 consensus, collaborative way. And I thought, well,
4 everybody gets to be heard? Wow. I mean, honestly that
5 may seem to elementary, but it was a significant shift in
6 my thinking. And it was a neat experience to go through
7 this organization. And the four or five years I was there
8 to come from such a corporate world and then have to --
9 I'm not abandoning all my concepts, but really learned to
10 work in a different platform. I found it to be very
11 challenging. There was a lot of things that I learned,
12 things I was exposed to.

13 And this Commission and the ability to be on it
14 seems much like that. It's a brand-new experience. There
15 is a lot of things that I can learn and skills that I
16 probably have or don't have that I can put to practice and
17 really learn how to work within a different set of -- and
18 maybe not. Maybe I'll be shocked. And it's the same
19 as -- I'm open to the experience. And I think it's
20 exciting to sort of pontificate on what could happen or
21 what couldn't happen.

22 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: I noticed on your
23 application that you are I think currently working on your
24 Parks and Rec Commission.

25 MS. SCHMITZ: I am.

1 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Who appointed you to that
2 position?

3 MS. SCHMITZ: It was a series of interviews with
4 the head of the Commission and the City Council.

5 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Do you know who made the
6 final appointment?

7 MS. SCHMITZ: I think it's the City Council.

8 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: When does your term
9 expire?

10 MS. SCHMITZ: It doesn't. I mean, it can if I
11 want it to. But we're four-year terms. And then the
12 Commission members -- so cute. I actually took -- Mr.
13 Pierson was the Commissioner before me. He had been on it
14 for 45 years.

15 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: It's a long-term --

16 MS. SCHMITZ: Yeah.

17 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: I don't know if you're
18 familiar at all with the new regulations the Bureau is
19 promulgating. There is language in the Voters First Act
20 that prohibits individuals who are appointed to the
21 Commission from serving in certain capacities, including
22 local appointments for a specified period after they've
23 been named to the Commission. And it's a really
24 fact-specific analysis.

25 So in order to know whether that would impact

1 you, one, the regulations have to be promulgated and
2 finalized. Two, we'll need to have you talk to somebody
3 at the Bureau about what you do.

4 But all of that aside, I wonder if you're
5 appointed to the Commission, are you willing -- to the
6 Citizen's Redistricting Commission, are you willing to
7 give up your lengthy term on the Parks and Rec Commission?

8 MS. SCHMITZ: I think if all that were to happen,
9 I'd like to explore -- I think this is really important.
10 I think this is something that clearly is going to effect
11 every citizen of our state. And it's a wonderful
12 opportunity to be a part of it.

13 And if all of those things happen, I would like
14 to go back to my Commission and explore, this would mean
15 that I step down and for X amount of time. And what do
16 you think of that?

17 I do feel like I have made a commitment to them
18 and I'm in my third year. If I have to do this before my
19 four years are up, I would like to talk that through with
20 them and really, really see how they felt about it.
21 Because I feel like I need to honor that commitment, and
22 this is a commitment that I made before any of this.
23 Obviously, I didn't foresee any of this happening. I
24 would be willing to look at it and see what the options
25 were. If it came down to it and I did have to resign,

1 that would be something I would have to do.

2 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Who, if anyone, encouraged
3 you to apply for this Citizen's Redistricting Commission?

4 MS. SCHMITZ: You know, it was interesting. I
5 read the USA Today every day, except Saturday and Sunday
6 because it doesn't come. And there was an article in
7 there about the initial application process and how this
8 state had less than ideal numbers of applicants. And I
9 was like, what the heck, people? Come on. This is our
10 opportunity. You should be doing this. I was kind of
11 thinking about it.

12 At dinner that night, I said to my husband, "Can
13 you believe that people aren't applying?" He said, "Well,
14 you didn't apply." I said, "Because we have babies." He
15 was like, "Our babies are six and three. They're not
16 babies." And I said, "Well" -- and then he said, "What
17 other excuses?" And I really sat there and thought, I
18 don't have an excuse. Why didn't I apply?

19 And so I went online and I started to research it
20 and I thought, I really -- yeah. I should apply. And
21 yeah, I shouldn't open my mouth and complain and I'm not
22 willing to do -- I'm totally willing.

23 So I went through the process. And I started to
24 do my initial application and I had submitted it. And the
25 mayor of our city at the time literally -- I think it was

1 the day I submitted it if not the day later sent me an
2 e-mail and said, "Hi, Velveth. I don't know if you're
3 aware, but this Commission -- and I think that you would
4 be great." And I was like, that's so weird that just
5 came. So it was a combination of I was reading. I came
6 across it. And it sparks my interest. And then once I
7 had already submitted the application, our mayor sent me
8 that e-mail and I thought, I'm meant to do this.

9 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: So that leads me to my
10 next question, which is you have little people. I have
11 little people. I know how demanding they are and how hard
12 it is to be away from them. Plus you've also indicated
13 that you're in charge at home. I'm just wondering are you
14 in a position -- are you going to be okay with the
15 potential to travel for a week at a time and be away from
16 your family?

17 MS. SCHMITZ: Well, so that we're clear. I like
18 to be in charge. But if we are really going to go like
19 who's the better parent, it's my husband. And I'm okay
20 with that. He's a really amazing dad. For me, that's not
21 really a problem.

22 My children are in school now, both five days a
23 week, which is amazing. And I really am wanting to do
24 something. And I think that this is a great opportunity.
25 I think this is very important. But I really am okay with

1 leaving them. As a matter of fact, coming here today is
2 kind of a pleasure.

3 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: It's restful.

4 MS. SCHMITZ: I can eat and it's still hot. Have
5 you had hot food? It's amazing.

6 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: You appear to be a person
7 who's very confident, very direct. I tend to be that way,
8 too. And sometimes people perceive that as either they
9 have a hard time with it or they say I'm being bossy or
10 whatever. How do people receive you?

11 MS. SCHMITZ: You know, it's interesting. I
12 think in my younger years there was "I love her" or "I
13 hate her" crowd. Like people -- again the confident
14 rubbed off and really they were like, ugh, or they really
15 loved me.

16 As I've grown older -- perhaps it's because after
17 you have your first child you also find a lot of
18 humility -- that I've also -- something in me has shifted
19 where although I'm confident and I'm secure in myself, I'm
20 still humble enough to know I don't know everything. I
21 can always learn. I'm constantly fascinated from things
22 that happen.

23 I went to Macys to buy mascara and a woman was
24 standing there. And we struck up a conversation. And 20
25 minutes later, she was telling she's in the end stages of

1 cancer. She just wanted to come to Macys to get something
2 to feel pretty. That connection was amazing.

3 And I think, you know, I didn't walk in there any
4 less confident or sure of myself than I am right now. But
5 I think the ability to see that I can always learn
6 something from somebody, the connection to other people is
7 really important to me. And that comes across.

8 I also think that there are people who see me and
9 are like, I want no part of you. And that's okay.

10 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: How do you think that will
11 work on the Commission?

12 MS. SCHMITZ: I think for someone who says, "I
13 want no part of you," then I just have to be patient and
14 understand we do have the work together. We have to
15 respect each other. And they don't have to be my friend.
16 They don't have to like me. But we do have to work
17 together.

18 And I think, you know, in Corporate America, I've
19 been exposed to people who clearly did not like me. But
20 we had to work together. And I respected them for at
21 least telling me to my face they didn't like me, which is
22 sometimes easier. But still, I find a way to be
23 professional and respectful. And, you know, you don't
24 have to like me, but you do have to get the job done.

25 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Very good. I don't have

1 any additional questions.

2 Panelists? Mr. Ahmadi?

3 CHAIR AHMADI: You answered most of my follow-up
4 questions I had.

5 One quick question about your fund-raising
6 activities. I'm sure in your application you say you're a
7 volunteer responsible for fund-raising. Which
8 organizations do you raise funds for?

9 MS. SCHMITZ: The Palos Verdes Junior Women's
10 Club is a club in my area that raises money for women and
11 children in crisis. It's a 501(c)(3). We would raise
12 money and disburse it to a charity. And the charities
13 change annually based on the membership and how they vote.

14 I do work for Torrance Memorial Hospital as a
15 hospice volunteer. There are a couple of fund-raisers
16 throughout the year. There's Memories of Mother T and
17 then there's the Light Up a Life. It's sort of a big
18 culmination. And people that come to those events donate
19 money towards the health and hospice of the hospital. I
20 raise money for that.

21 I also raise money for the University of
22 California. So I've been on their Alumni Association and
23 do it in different way. I do it through class reunions.
24 This is all volunteer. It's not my professional life. I
25 raise money that way through connections I know or being a

1 contact for the person at university relations.

2 CHAIR AHMADI: You mentioned connections. What
3 do you mean by that?

4 MS. SCHMITZ: So, for instance, the class -- like
5 my husband's class is having a ten-year reunion this year.
6 And my Lacrosse coach that was my coach when I was at
7 Berkeley now works with this woman. And so my coach said
8 to her, "Velveth's really social. And you should call her
9 and she can introduce you to people." Then the person at
10 University called me and said, "Here's a list of all the
11 people in the class. Who do you know?" And I went
12 through and I checked off the people.

13 And then I said, I will send an e-mail saying,
14 "Hi. It's your ten-year" -- this is my husband's class.
15 "It's your ten-year reunion and they're fund-raising for
16 your class gift. Myra is going to be the person at
17 University Relations. If you're interested in a donation,
18 and they contact her. So an in-between.

19 CHAIR AHMADI: Not like a connection with the
20 State Legislature and their offices?

21 MS. SCHMITZ: No. Just my friend.

22 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you very much. No more
23 questions.

24 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: I don't believe we have
25 any further questions for the panel. We have about 13

1 minutes remaining if you'd like to make a closing
2 statement.

3 MS. SCHMITZ: I didn't really prepare one.

4 But I guess off the top of my head I think this
5 is an exciting opportunity. I think that public service
6 is very important. And I admire the people who do it. I
7 clearly do it in my city with my Parks and Activities
8 Commission, and I feel that's really important. I love
9 the environment, helping to keep our parks clean and
10 running well so that people can enjoy them is important to
11 me. And I think that some is something really important
12 for our state.

13 I think it's a wonderful opportunity for the
14 citizens to be involved and to work in public service in a
15 way that you don't have to run for office or other things.
16 And I would be very honored to be given the ability to
17 serve on the Commission.

18 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you.

19 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you.

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

21 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Thank you so much for
22 coming to see us. Let's recess until 12:59.

23 (Thereupon the Panel recessed at 12:17 p.m.)

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